THE *GRAND PRESUMPTION* Of the ROMAN CHURCH In Equalling their own TRADITIONS TO THE Written Word OF GOD.

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THE *GRAND PRESUMPTION* OF THE ROMAN CHURCH

In Equalling their own Traditions to th Written Word of God.

Col. 3. 16.

Let the Word of Chriſt dwell in you richly, &c.

THIS is the Obſervation of St. *Chryſoſtom*, and an undoubted Truth, Πᾶσαι μὲν ἁγίαι αἱ Ἐπιστολαὶ Παύλου· ἔχουσι δέ τι πλέον αἱ δεδεμένου αὐτοῦ πεμπόμεναι, οἷα ἐστὶν αὕτη ἡ παροῦσα. All the Epiſtles of St. *Paul* are ſacred; but yet there is ſomething more then ordinary in thoſe Epiſtles of his which were written and ſent to ſuch and ſuch *Churches* or *Perſons* when he was in his *Bonds*, whereof this to the *Coloſſians* was one. *Theophylact* reckons up five ſeverall Epiſtles written by St. *Paul* whilſt he was a Priſoner.

Chryſoſt. ad Col. c. 1. v. 1.

Theophyl. in Argum. Epiſt. ad Col.

ner. Ἡ πρὸς Ἐφεσίους, ἡ πρὸς Φιλήμονα, ἡ πρὸς Τιμόθεον, ἡ πρὸς Φιλιππησίους, καὶ αὕτη δὲ πρὸς Κολοσσαεῖς, ἐν δεσμοῖς ὄντος ἐγράφη· The Epiſtle to the *Epheſians*, to *Philemon*, to *Timothy*, to the *Philippians*, and this to the *Coloſſians*, were written by St. *Paul* when he was in *Bonds*. That this Epiſtle was certainly written at *Rome*, we learn from its ancient *Poſtſcript*; which is confirm'd by the expreſs Teſtimony of *Oecumenius*, Ταύτην ἐπιστέλλει ἀπὸ Ῥώμης, St. *Paul* ſent this Epiſtle from *Rome*. And that it was one of the *lateſt*, we gather from St. *Chryſoſtom*, who ſaith that the Apoſtle wrote it πρὸς τῷ τέλει τοῦ κηρύγματος, towards the *End* of his Preaching; ſo late, that *Chronologers* place it in the ſixtieth year of *Chriſt*.

Oecum. in Argum. Epiſt. ad Col.

Chryſ. ad Col. c. 1. v. 1.

Who theſe *Coloſſians* were, and in what Region of the world their City ſtood, we learn from ſeverall Authours. Πόλις τῆς Φρυγίας ἦν· καὶ δῆλον ἐκ τοῦ τὴν Λαοδίκειαν πλησίον εἶναι· ſo St. *Chryſoſtom*: and after him *Theophylact*, Πόλις Φρυγίας αἱ Κολοσσαὶ, αἱ νῦν λεγόμεναι Χῶναι, or Χῶνα ſaith *Oecumenius*; *Coloſſe* was a City of *Phrygia*, (now called *Chona*) as is evident, in that *Laodicea* was within its Neighbourhood. This City *Herodotus* ſtyles μεγάλην, Great; and *Xenophon* calleth it εὐδαίμονα, Proſperous, thriving, rich: ſo great, and ſo rich, that *Pliny*, reckoning up *Phrygiæ oppida celeberrima*, the moſt famous Towns of *Phrygia*, counts this for one.

Chryſ. ad Col. c. 1. v. 2. *Theophyl.* in locum eundem. *Oecum.* in locum eundem.

In this renowned City the Goſpel was planted by *Epaphras*: which being done, the Devil, according to his uſuall manner, raiſed up ſuch and ſuch *Hereticks* to ſubvert it. Thus *Theophylact*, Πονηρόν τι δόγμα αὐτοῖς ἐνεπολιτεύετο, There was a certain *wicked Opinion* ſpred amongſt them: and what that was he tells us: Ὥουτο γάρ, ἀ διὰ τοῦ Υἱοῦ, ἀλλὰ δι' ἀγγέ-

Theoph. in Argum. Epiſt. ad Col.

λων,

λων, προσαχθῆναι τῷ Θεῷ καὶ Πατρί· They ſuppoſed that Man hath acceſs to God and the Father, not by the *Son*, but by the *Angels*. But beſides this heterodox and monſtrous Opinion, *Theodoret* ſaith, Πολλὰς ἔ-χον παρατηρήσεις Ἰουδαϊκὰς καὶ Ἑλληνικὰς, They had many *Greek* and *Jewiſh* Obſervations, mingling Heatheniſh *Philoſophy* with *Chriſtianity*, reducing the abrogated *Ceremonies* of the Law, and confounding *Chriſt* with *Moſes*. The conſideration of theſe erroneous Opinions and Practices, which *Epaphras* had made known to St. *Paul*, did κινεῖν τὸν Ἀπόστολον πρὸς τὸ γράψαι ταύτην τὴν Ἐπιστολήν, move the Apoſtle to write this Epiſtle; wherein, beſides the Proem and the Epilogue, he layeth down, δογματικῶς, the great *Doctrines* and Principles of *Faith*: he alſo gives them, ἠθικῶς, ſuch and ſuch morall Inſtructions and *Rules* of *life*. And becauſe it was impoſſible for him in one ſhort Epiſtle to illuſtrate or comprehend ὅλην ἐγκυκλοπαιδείαν, the whole entire *Syſteme* and Body of *Chriſtianity*, in all its diſtinct and particular branches; he therefore refers them to that *comprehenſive* and perfect *Rule*, the written Word of God, as being ſufficient to *arm* them againſt all *Hereſies*, to *confirm* them in the *Faith*, and *guide* them in their *Converſation*: and that's the buſineſs of the Text, *Let the word of Chriſt dwell*, &c.

Theodoret. in Argum. Ep. ad Col.

Theo

The words contain a neceſſary Exhortation, given indeed immediately to that Church whereunto St. *Paul* wrote and directed this Epiſtle; but deſigned and intended for all *Churches*, yea and *Perſons* too, where the Goſpel is or ſhall be preached for ever. We have in them three things conſiderable.

1. The *Matter* or *Object* of that Endeavour and Study to which the Apoſtle doth invite us; and that is, λόγος Χριστῦ, *the word of Chriſt*. But what's that? *Cornelius à Lapide* anſwers thus, *Doctrina & Evangelium Chriſti*, 'Tis the *Doctrine* and Goſpel of *Chriſt*: and thus *Calvin*, who tells us, *Vult Doctrinam Evangelii illis eſſe familiarem*, The Apoſtle would have the *Doctrine* of the *Goſpel* to be familiar to them. *Eſtius* expounds it thus; *Fides ſeu Doctrina Chriſti*, the Faith or Doctrine of *Chriſt*: ἡ διδασκαλία, τὰ δόγματα, αἱ παραινέσεις, δι' ὧν διδάσκει ἡμᾶς ὁ Χριστός, the Inſtructions, the Doctrines, the Admonitions, whereby *Chriſt* teacheth us; ſo *Theophylact*. Our learned *Davenant* extends the Expreſſion farther, and takes in the *Old Teſtament* too: *Evangelium, vel Doctrina Scripturarum*; St. *Paul* means either the *Goſpel*, or the *whole* Doctrine of the *Scriptures*. Accordingly St. *Chryſoſtom* here tells the Laiety, Ἐπιτρέπει ὑμῖν τὰς γραφὰς ἀναγινώσκειν, St. *Paul* permits you to reade the *Scriptures*. So that by the *word of Chriſt* in the Text we may very well underſtand *both* the *Teſtaments*: which Latitude of Interpretation is countenanced by ſome Manuſcripts, which reade it, as *Grotius* obſerves, ὁ λόγος τῦ Θεῦ, the *Word* (not, of *Chriſt*, but) of *God*. And ſo the *Arabick* Verſion, *Sermo Dei*, the Word of *God*, even the *whole* Sacred Writ.

2. The τὸ πῶς, or *Manner*, which the Apoſtle preſcribes, and every man muſt obſerve, in his reading and ſtudying the *Word* of *Chriſt*. 'Tis thus expreſſed, ἐνοικείτω, *let it dwell*. What's that? *Nè patiamini Verbum Dei, quaſi peregrinum, foris ſtare, ſed intromittatur in domicilium Cordis veſtri*, ſaith our excellent *Davenant*; *Do not ſuffer the Word*

Word of Christ to stand without doors, like a stranger, but admit it into the inward man: and when once 'tis received, keep it fast; *nunquam ex animis vestris abeat*, let it never go out of your minds; so *Grotius*. 'Tis the Observation of St. *Chrysostom* and *Theophylact*, Οὐκ εἶπεν, Ὁ λόγος τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐν ὑμῖν ἔστω ἁπλῶς· ἀλλὰ τί; ἐνοικείτω· St. *Paul* doth not barely say, Let the word of *Christ be* in you; but, let it *dwell*, and that πλουσίως, richly, *i. e.* μετὰ πολλῆς τῆς περιουσίας, in great abundance. 'Tis not enough to acquaint our selves with a *few* Passages onely; but we are concerned to study *Prophetas, Apostolos, Evangelistas*, saith Bishop *Davenant*, the Prophets, the Apostles, the Evangelists, even the *whole* written Word of God.

3. The *Persons* whom St. *Paul* doth thus exhort to reade, study, and familiarly acquaint themselves with, the *Word* of *Christ*. The Text saith, Ἐνοικείτω ἐν ὑμῖν, Let the Word of *Christ* dwell in *you*. But *who* are they? Certainly the self-same persons to whom he directs his whole Epistle; and that stands thus inscribed, Τοῖς ἐν Κολοσσαῖς ἁγίοις καὶ πιστοῖς ἀδελφοῖς ἐν Χριστῷ, To the *Saints* and faithfull *brethren* in *Christ* which are at *Colosse*. The Expression takes in not *Archippus*, not the *Bishop*, not their *Ministers* onely; but the *common people*, even *all* that professed the Faith of *Christ* too. Col. 1. 2.

The first thing considerable in the Text (and which alone I shall here handle) is the *Matter* or *Object* of that Study whereunto St. *Paul* doth here invite the *Colossians* and all Christians whatsoever; and that is, λόγος Χριστοῦ, *the Word of Christ*, the *Law* and the *Gospel*, *Moses* and the *Prophets*, the *Evangelists* and the *Apostles*, the *Old* Testament and the

the *New*. Now that whatſoever is contained in any of theſe moſt certainly is, and may therefore moſt juſtly be ſtyled, *The Word of Chriſt*, is evident upon a twofold ground.

1. *Chriſt* is the *Efficient Cauſe* of all the Scripture; each of the Teſtaments hath him for its *Authour*. See this diſtinctly in three Particulars.

First, *Chriſt* is the Great and undoubted *Authour* of the *Law*. The Evangeliſt indeed tells us, *The Law was given by Moſes:* but how that was *Origen* tells us, who thus diſtinguiſheth; Νενοήκαμεν τὸν μὲν νόμον διὰ Μωσέως δεδόσθαι, οὐχ ὑπὸ Μωσέως. We underſtand that the Law was given *by Moſes*, but not *from* him. Doubtleſs *Origen* means the ſame thing which *Eraſmus* thus expreſſeth, *Moſes Legis Authorem non fuit*, *Moſes* was not the *Authour* of that Law; no, *Caſtalio* tells us, *Quòd Lex data eſt, Divini fuit Beneficii*, The giving of the Law was from the Kindneſs of God. As for *Moſes*, 'tis ſaid, *he received the lively Oracles*; διακονήμενος, καὶ λαβὼν παρ' ἑτέρου, ſaith St. *Chryſoſtom*, he received the Law from another; and ſo proved not the *Legiſlator* to eſtabliſh and *make* the Law, but a *Miniſter*, an Herauld, a Scribe, to *receive*, proclaim and write it. So that *Ebion*, that peſtilent Heretick, had no reaſon to think *Moſes*, who is ſaid to have given the Law, to be upon that ſcore a greater man then *Chriſt*.

Joh. 1. 17.
Origen. in Joannem.
Eraſm. in Joann. c. 1. 17.
Caſt. in Joann. c. 1. 16.
Acts 7. 38.
Chryſ. in Joan. 1. 17.

But although the firſt Promulgation and Delivery of the Law upon Mount *Sinai* cannot poſſibly be aſcribed unto *Moſes*, yet it ſeems very clearly to be attributed unto *Angels*. Thus St. *Paul*, *For if the word ſpoken by angels was ſtedfaſt*, &c. What

What word was that? *Theophylact* tells us, Ἤτοι ὁ δεκάλογος, ἢ πάντα τὰ προστάγματα τὰ ἐν τῇ παλαιᾷ διὰ τῶν ἀγγέλων οἰκονομηθέντα· the Apoſtle means either the *Decalogue*, or generally *all* Commands diſpenſed by *Angels* under the Old Teſtament. Thus St. *Chryſoſtom*, Δεκάλογος, προστάγματα, the Decalogue, the Commandments: *Lex Moſis*, the Law of *Moſes*; ſo *Grotius*. And of this Law the Apoſtle doth elſewhere thus affirm, διαταγεὶς δι' ἀγγέλων, it was ordained by *Angels*. How ſo? *Miniſterio Angelorum*, by the Miniſtery of Angels; ſo *Clarius*. 'Tis the obſervation of *Grotius*, that the Law was pronounced by ſome *one* of the *Angels*, others attending round about him. *Theophylact.* in locum. *Chryſ.* in locum. Galat. 3. 19.

And that the Law was indeed delivered by ſome *one* ſingle *Angel*, we learn from that of St. *Stephen*; *This is that Moſes who was in the church in the wilderneſs, with the angel that ſpake to him in the mount Sina:* μετ' ἀγγέλου, with *the Angel*, the expreſſion imports that it was ſome *one* particular *Angel* who pronounced the Law. But what and who this *Angel* was, 'tis ſomewhat uncertain. *Grotius* ſaith, it was *unus ex præcipuis Angelis*, one of the *chiefeſt* Angels; it was *ſuch* an *Angel* as was counted worthy to repreſent the *perſon* and bear the *name* of *God*. So *Moſes* tells us, *God ſpake all theſe words*. And as *Moſes* gives him this glorious Title, ſo doth this *Angel* himſelf aſſume and own it; *I am the Lord thy God*, &c. And that he was ſo indeed, the people believed; *The Lord our God hath ſhewed us his glory, and we have heard his voice: we have ſeen this day, that God doth talk with man*, &c. From theſe expreſſions ſeveral Interpreters do gather, that this *Angel* who delivered the Law was the *Second Perſon* in the Act. 7. 38. *Grot.* in Heb. 2. 2. Exod. 20. 1. Deut. 5. 24.

Trinity, whose various Appearances under the Old Testament were nothing else but, as St. *Austine* calls them, *Symbola & Præludia Incarnationis*, the *Symbols*, Tokens and Essays of his *Incarnation*.

Gregorius Naz. Orat. 49. This is that which *Nazianzene* confidently affirms, *Filium Dei in Monte Sina cum Mose locutum esse scimus*; That the *Son* of God upon Mount *Sina* did discourse with *Moses*, is a thing that we know. And to this purpose doth St. *Chrysostom* *Chrysostomus* in Act. 7. 30. expound that passage of St. *Stephen*, *He was in the wilderness with the angel*. What *Angel* means he? St. *Chrysostom* answers, τὸν Υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ ἄγγελον καλεῖ· 'Tis the *Son* of God whom he calleth an *Angel*: and again, a little after, ἐντεῦθεν δείκνυσι ὅτι ὁ ὀφθεὶς αὐτῷ ἄγγελος ἦν ὁ μεγάλης βουλῆς ἄγγελος· the expression sheweth, that the *Angel* who appeared to *Moses* was the Angel of the *great Counsel*: and who is that? *Dionysius* the *Areopagite* answers thus, αὐτὸς Ἰησοῦς, *Jesus* himself. *Dionys. Areop.* Cœlest. Hierarchiæ c. 4.

And indeed, that it was some Person of the Blessed *Trinity* that delivered the Law, was the Opinion not onely of *Philo* the Jew, but of St. *Cyprian*, *Justine Martyr*, *Tertullian*, and some other Fathers of the Christian Church, who affirmed with one consent, *revera fuisse Deum*, that it was *God* indeed. But let us admit the Opinion of these learned and pious men to be a mistake, and that of St. *Dionysius* to be a Truth; Διδάσκει τοῦτο ἡ Θεολογία, τὴν ἱερὰν τοῦ νόμου διαταγὴν διὰ Ἀγγέλων εἰς ἡμᾶς προελθεῖν· The Scriptures teach us that the Divine Law was handed to us by *Angels*: so *Josephus* too; τὰ κάλλιστα τῶν δογμάτων καὶ τὰ ὁσιώτατα ἐν τοῖς νόμοις διʼ ἀγγέλων· Our most excellent Doctrines and most holy Precepts were delivered to us by *Angels*. *Dionys.* ubi supra. *Joseph.* l. 15.

Well,

Well, ſuppoſe it be certain that *Angels*, properly ſo called, had to doe with the delivery of the Law; yet this doth no way hinder but that *Chriſt* may be, and ſurely is, the *Legiſlatour* ſtill: for whatever this *Angel*, whoever he was, delivered upon Mount *Sina*, was the *Dictate* of *God*. So the ſame Authours tell us. Ἐκ Θεοῦ δεδωρημένον, The Law was given by *God*; ſo *Dionyſius*: δι' Ἀγγέλων παρὰ Θεοῦ μαθόντων, The Law was delivered by *Angels*, who had learn'd and *received* it from *God*; ſo *Joſephus*.

And what *Perſon* of the Godhead it was, Saint *Auſtine* thus informs us. *Quemadmodum Verbum Dei, quod eſt Chriſtus, loquitur in Propheta, ſic & in Angelo loquitur*; As the *Word* of God, which is *Chriſt*, ſpeaks in a *Prophet*, ſo doth he ſpeak in an *Angel* too. *Auguſt.* contra Adimantum c. 9.

I remember *Cælius Rhodiginus* tells us that the Law-givers of the Nations were very ambitious to make their Subjects believe, that all the Laws which they eſtabliſhed were derived from ſome *Deity* or other. Thus *Triſmegiſtus* fathered his Laws upon *Mercury*; *Draco* and *Solon* theirs upon *Minerva*; *Zamolxis* his upon *Veſta*; *Plato* his upon *Jupiter* and *Apollo*; *Numa* his upon *Egeria*, &c. Now that Divine Honour which they ſought for their Laws ours hath, which undoubtedly is the *Law of a God*, or, as my Text words it, λόγος Χριστοῦ, *the word of Chriſt*, that Glorious Law-giver, with whom thoſe of this World whom *Seneca* mentions for the wiſeſt, *Solon*, *Lycurgus*, *Zaleucus*, *Charondas*, &c. are not once to be named. *Cæl. Rhodig.* l. 18. c. 19. *Seneca* Epiſt. 9.

Secondly, All the *Prophecies* of the Old Teſtament have *Chriſt* for their *Author* too.

'Tis certain, that those Holy men who delivered the Prophecies of the Old Testament to the *Jewish* Church were inspired from Heaven; and hence it
Deut. 33. 1. is that the Scripture styles a Prophet אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים, *a man of God*, i. e. a man *commissioned*, authori-
2 Pet. 1. 20. zed and informed by *God*. St. *Peter* tells us, *No prophecie of the Scripture is of any private interpretation*, ἰδίας ἐπιλύσεως· of private incitation, so our learned *Hammond* renders it: the expression imports, that the Prophets were not *suæ mentis, sed Divini Consilii, Interpretes*, as *Cameron* words it; they did not reveal their *own* minds, but *God's*.
Heb. 1. 1. Thus St. *Paul*, *God spake by the Prophets*; they were Θεοφορέμενοι, men *carried*, acted and taught by *God*.

And what *Person* of the Trinity it was that in-
2 Pet. 1. 21. spired these Prophets St. *Peter* tells us, *Holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*. Thus
Ezek. 11. 5. *Ezekiel*, *The Spirit of the Lord fell upon me, and said unto me, Speak, Thus saith the Lord*, &c. There was ἐπιφοίτησις Πνεύματος, saith *Cameron*, the *Spirit* of God did *invade*, seise and enter the *Prophets* of old: and, upon that score, those Messages which they delivered and left upon record are commonly styled γράμματα ἁγίγραφα, the *Holy* Writings; or, as *Dionysius* calleth them, Θεολογίαι, the *Discourses*, Sermons, or Words of *God*.

And as the *Prophecies* of these Holy men with a respect to the *whole* Trinity are indeed the Word of God; so likewise with a more particular *Appropriation* to the *Second* Person they may be justly styled, according to the expression in the Text, λόγος Χριστοῦ, the *word* of *Christ*. For that this Blessed *Spirit*, by whom these Prophets were infallibly

bly taught and guided in all their Meſſages, is indeed the *Spirit* of *Chriſt*, 'tis an Article of our Chriſtian Faith, delivered to us both in the *Nicene* and *Athanaſian* Creeds. For although the Title that was expreſly given the *Spirit* by the ancient Fathers of the *Greek* Church in the Creeds of *Nicæa* and *Conſtantinople* were onely this, τὸ ἐκ Πατρὸς ἐκπορευόμενον, the *Spirit* that *proceeds* from the *Father*; yet that it was their conſtant belief that the *Spirit* did alſo proceed from the *Son*, our excellent Biſhop *Pearſon* hath undeniably evinced from ſeveral expreſſions of *Epiphanius*, who thus affirms, Πνεῦμα Θεοῦ πνεῦμα Πατρὸς καὶ πνεῦμα Υἱοῦ, The Spirit of God is the Spirit of the *Father* and the Spirit of the *Son* too; ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ, he is *from* the *Father* and *from* the *Son*: and that, doubtleſs, not onely as he was anciently termed λαμβάνον, *receiving* from the Father and the Son; but, ἐκπορευόμενον, *proceeding* too. *Pearſon* on the Creed. *Epiphanius* in Ancor.

And this *Proceſſion* of the Spirit from the *Son* though the Scripture doth no-where deliver in *expreſſe* and open terms, yet it doth *virtually* contain and juſtly warrant it. For as he is ſtyled the *Spirit* of the *Father*, ſo is he as plainly ſtyled the *Spirit* of the *Son* too: ſo St. *Paul*, *God hath ſent forth the Spirit of his Son.* And as he is ſtyled the *Spirit* of *God*, ſo is he ſtyled the *Spirit* of *Chriſt* too: thus the ſame St. *Paul*, *If any man have not the Spirit of Chriſt*, &c. So then, 'tis evident that this Bleſſed *Spirit* by whom the *Prophets* of old were inſpired and acted is indeed the *Spirit* of *Chriſt*. So much St. *Peter* doth yet farther aſſure us, *The Spirit of Chriſt which was in the Prophets*, &c. And methinks if that Holy *Spirit* by whoſe immediate Inſpi- Gal. 4. 6. Rom. 8. 9. 1 Pet. 1. 11.

Inspiration all the *Prophets* did speak and write were and is the *Spirit* of *Christ*, we may easily grant that every Truth which these *Prophets*, by the *Guidance* of this *Spirit*, have delivered and left upon record, is λόγος Χριστοῦ, the *word* of *Christ*.

Thirdly, The *New* Testament hath *Christ* for
Rom. 1. 9. its *Authour* too. 'Tis often styled Εὐαγγέλιον Χριστοῦ, the *Gospel* of *Christ*. St. *Paul* calleth it Εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Υἱοῦ, the *Gospel* of the *Son*: and well he may, for all the Sermons recorded by the four Evangelists are the *Sermons* of this *Son*; all the mighty works registred in these severall Gospels are the *Miracles* of this *Son*; all the Promises that are anywhere delivered by St. *Matthew*, *Mark*, *Luke*, or *John*, are the *Promises* of this *Son*; and whatever Truth we find mentioned by any one or all the Evangelists, 'tis the *Doctrine* of this *Son*. Thus St. *Paul*,
Heb. 1. 2. *God hath spoken to us by his Son*, &c. Under the *Law* God spake by *Angels* and *Prophets*, that were his *Servants*; but under and in the *Gospel* he hath spoke more immediately by *Christ*, who is his *Son*.

And as the main Passages recorded by the four Evangelists were thus immediately delivered by *Christ* in his own Person: so likewise those *holy men*, who were *Amanuenses Dei*, the Secretaries and Pen-men of the Spirit, to write what our Saviour did and preached, and so to transmit his *Truths*, his *Commands* and his *Miracles* to all succeeding Ages, were *provided* and raised by *Christ*
Ephes. 4. 11. too. So that Text informs us, *He gave some Apostles, and some Evangelists*, &c. Αὐτὸς ἔδωκεν, *He* gave, *&c.* but *who* is that? *Idem ipse Christus*, so *Estius*; ὁ Υἱὸς, so St. *Chrysostom*: 'tis *Christ*, 'tis the

Son,

Son, that gave. But what did he give? Ἀποστόλους, Apoſtles, ſuch as St. *Paul*, *Silas*, *Barnabas*, &c. to *preach* the Goſpel; and Εὐαγγελιστὰς, Evangeliſts, τὰς τὸ Εὐαγγέλιον γεάψαντας, ſo St. *Chryſoſtom*: he gave St. *Matthew* and others to *write* the Goſpel, and by ſo doing to convey it ſincere, pure and incorrupt to all Generations. And this doth Saint *Paul* acknowledge; *By Chriſt we have receeived Grace and Apoſtleſhip*: hence doth St. *Peter* ſtyle himſelf thus, *Peter an Apoſtle of Jeſus Chriſt*, &c. *Chriſt* himſelf was known by the name of ὁ Ἀπόστολος, the *Apoſtle* of his *Father*; but St. *Peter* and St. *Paul* were His. Rom. 1. 5. 1 Pet. 1. 1.

And as theſe *Apoſtles* received their ſeverall Commiſſions from *Chriſt*, ſo were they careful to preach thoſe very Doctrines which *Chriſt* himſelf had taught them. Thus St. *Paul*, *I have received of the Lord, that which I delivered unto you. Non confinxi pro Ingenio meo*, &c. ſaith *Cameron*: St. *Paul* did not *invent*, but *receive*, what Truths he preached and wrote; they were not the *Iſſues* of his *own Brain*, but the *Revelations* and Dictates of *Chriſt*. And if ſo, if the Evangeliſts and Apoſtles, who preached and penned the whole New Teſtament, were not onely *raiſed* by *Chriſt*, but infallibly *taught* by *his Spirit* too, we may conclude, that this holy Goſpell, which was publiſhed and regiſtred by theſe inſpired Perſons, is indeed λόγος Χριστοῦ, the *word of Chriſt*. But, 1 Cor. 11. 23.

2. The Scriptures are, and may be juſtly ſtyled, λόγος Χριστοῦ, *the word of Chriſt*, not onely as he is the *Authour* of the *whole*, but alſo as he is the *chief Subject* and Matter of the moſt *materiall* Paſſages that are found therein. See this again in three Particulars. Firſt,

First, *Christ* is the grand *subject* Matter of the
Gal. 3. 24. *Law*. St. *Paul* tells us, *the Law was our Schoolmaster:* but what Lessons doth it *teach* us? the Text answers, *the Law was our Schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ:* 'tis evident that *Christ* was taught even by the *Law*. Thus *Calvin*, *In tota Ceremoniarum Pompa quicquid oculis ingerebatur, id quasi notam Christi impressam habebat*; Whatever Ceremonies the *Law* commanded, they were so many *Types* and Representations of *Christ*.

And that *Christ* was indeed the *Person* concerned and aimed at in the *Law*, it seems very evident from that expression which St. *Paul* bor-
Psalm 40.7. rows from the *Psalmist*, *In the volume of the Book it is written of me*, &c. Ἐν κεφαλίδι, in the *head* of the *Book*. But what *book* doth he mean? Saint *Augustine* answers, *librum Psalmorum*, the *Book* of *Psalms*. But that cannot well be, because the *Psalms* in *David*'s time were not yet collected into a *Book*. St. *Hierom* therefore expounds it thus, *In the volume of the Book*, i. e. *In principio Geneseos*, In the *beginning* of *Genesis*. But if not so, if St. *Hierom* were mistaken in the *particular Text* to which the *Psalmist* referreth; yet we have all reason to believe that he meant the *writings* of *Moses*: for, as *Ludovicus Cappellus* rightly observes, in *David*'s age there was scarce any other part of God's Word yet written *præter Pentateuchum*, besides the *Pentateuch*, and perhaps that of *Job*. And to confirm this Interpretation of the Text, 'tis observed by severall Authours, that the five *Books* of *Moses* were usually styled by the *Jews*, κατ' ἐξοχὴν saith *Muis*, ἀντονομαστικῶς saith *Cappellus*, τὸ Βιβλίον, *The Book*; i. e. the *chief* and most *excellent Book*.

But

But whether the *Pſalmiſt*, and after him St. *Paul*, do particularly mean theſe *Books* of *Moſes* or not; 'tis ſure enough that our Bleſſed *Saviour* was much concerned in them. So much doth he himſelf expreſly tell the *Jews*, *Moſes wrote of me.* It was one great Argument whereby our Bleſſed *Saviour* did convince the *Jews* of groſs Hypocriſy. Διϊακρίζεσθε Μωϋσῆ πιςεύειν, ſaith *Chriſt*, Ye do ſtoutly contend that ye *believe* the *Writings* of *Moſes*, and *doe* what he *commands*; but indeed there is no ſuch matter: for *had ye believed Moſes, ye would have believed me*; were ye indeed *his* Diſciples, ye would have been *mine* too; for *he wrote of me.* Joh. 5. 46.

And that he did ſo indeed, is farther cleared from that Diſcourſe which our Bleſſed *Saviour* had upon the day of his *Reſurrection* with the two Diſciples upon the way. The Text ſaith, *he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himſelf:* but whence took he the firſt *riſe* and ground of his Diſcourſe? the Text anſwers thus, ἀρξάμενος ἀπὸ Μωσέως, *beginning from Moſes.* So then 'tis evident that *Moſes*, who was the Pen-man of the *Law*, was the firſt Pen-man of the *Goſpel* too; he was an *Evangeliſt* as well as a *Prophet*: and although he repreſented *Chriſt*, as *Grotius* words it, ἐν τύποις καὶ συμβόλοις, by ſymbolicall *Types* and *Figures*; though his Doctrine of the *Meſſias* was involved and wrapt up, as *Dionyſius* phraſeth it, παραπετάσμασιν ἱεροῖς, in ſacred *Veils*; yet, ſure we are, the *Matter* of his Writings is *Goſpel* as well as *Law.* Luk. 24. 27.

2. *Chriſt* is the great and principall *Subject* of the *Prophets* too. The miraculous *Conception*, the wonderfull *Nativity*, the holy *Life*, the ignomini-

ous *Death*, the honourable *Buriall*, the stupendious *Resurrection*, the glorious *Ascension* and *Session* of *Christ* at God's right hand, and his *coming* again to *Judgement*, are all recorded by the *Prophets*. Insomuch that it seems very strange, that the *Jews*, who had long expected their *Messias*, should not discover *Christ* to be the man. St. *Paul* tells us,

Act. 13. 27. *They that dwell at Hierusalem and their Rulers knew him not.* But what made them to be thus ignorant? The reason follows thus, *They knew not the voices of the Prophets:* the Text imports, that whosoever knows the *Prophets* must needs know the *Messias* too; which is a convincing argument that they wrote about him.

The *Evangelists* do often tell us, that such and such *Passages* relating to *Christ*, such and such *Circumstances* that did attend his *Life* and *Death*, were signal *Accomplishments* of such and such *Predictions*. What expression more frequent then this, *Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by the Prophet?* Yea, if it were *fulfilled*, then was it *spoken* too; if there was an *Accomplishment*, there must be a *Prophecie* too. And the truth is, the *Prediction* is often urged as the great *reason* of the *Event* in several Passages that relate to *Christ*. Thus St. *Mat-*

Matt. 1. 22. *thew, All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Prophet.* And thus our *Sa-*

Luk. 24. 44. *viour* himself seems to argue; *All things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me.* Whatever stands *written* in the *Prophets*, we find *accomplished* in the *Evangelists:* his very *Death*, of all things in the world the most *unlikely*, could

Matt. 26. 54. not be excepted. *Thus it must be*; the Son of man

man *must suffer* and die: but why so? he tells us, *The Son of man goeth, as it is written of him:* written *where?* and by *whom?* St. *Peter* answers, *God beforehand had shewed by the mouth of all his Prophets, that Christ should suffer.* Act. 3. 18. 'Tis evident from these and many more like expressions, that *Christ*, and the *things* of *Christ*, were the *great Argument*, the *principal Subject*, nay the *onely Theme*, upon which the *Universality* of the *Prophets* did both speak and write.

3. *Christ* is the great *Subject* of the *Evangelists* and *Apostles* too. What is the grand Argument of St. *Matthew*'s *Gospel*, the very first Verse thus informs us, *The Book of the generation of Jesus Christ.* *Zegerus* tells us, *Hoc ceu Titulo totius rei summam, omnémque Evangelicæ hujus Narrationis præsignat Historiam*; The Evangelist in this short Title informs us what is the *Summe* and *Argument* of his *whole* Discourse: and that is, saith *Clarius*, *tota Servatoris Vita*, the whole *Life* of our Blessed *Saviour.*

Indeed *Erasmus* affirms, *Hic Titulus non est universi Argumenti*; This *Title*, which St. *Matthew* doth here prefix before his *Gospell*, doth not comprehend the Summe of his *whole* Book: and *Grotius* contends, that it is but Ἐπιγραφὴ μερικὴ, a *partiall Inscription*, referring onely to *Christ*'s *Originall.* But however, what we want in the *Title*, we have in the *Book*, which from the beginning to the end contains nothing else but the *Conception*, *Nativity*, *Life*, *Death*, *Burial* and *Resurrection* of *Christ.*

And as for St. *Mark*, who, as St. *Austin* observes, did little more then *epitomize* St. *Matthew*'s Gospell, he thus enters upon his work; *The beginning*

of the Goſpell of Jeſus Chriſt. And that this is indeed *Operis Titulus*, the *Title* of his *whole* Book, which comprehends the ſumme of all his following Diſcourſe, and ſheweth that his deſign was to treat of *nothing* elſe but *Chriſt*, is the acknowledgement of *Eraſmus*, who denieth St. *Matthew*'s Title ſo to be and doe.

And what is the Subject *Matter* of St. *Luke*'s Goſpel, himſelf acquaints his friend *Theophilus*:
Act. 1. 1. *The former Treatiſe have I made of all that Jeſus began both to doe and teach. Partitus eſt omnem Chriſti Vitam in Facta & Doctrinam*, ſaith *Eraſmus*; St. *Luke* doth here divide the *whole Life* of *Chriſt* into the *Miracles* which he *wrought*, and the *Sermons* which he *preached*; and tells *Theophilus*, that theſe two were the great *Contents* of his former *Book*. Thus *Grotius: Hæc verba brevem Evangelii deſcriptionem continent*; Theſe words contain a ſhort deſcription of St. *Luke*'s whole *Goſpel*, and ſhew that *Chriſt* is the *Subject* of it.

And as for the *Acts* of the *Apoſtles*, *Quid aliud eſt quàm Evangelii pars?* ſaith *Eraſmus*, What is it elſe but a *part* of the *Goſpel*? What contains it but an *Hiſtory* of what the *Apoſtles* did and ſuffered upon the *Account* of *Chriſt*?

And what Saint *John*, our fourth *Evangeliſt*, treats of, the very firſt line of his *Goſpel* tells us, *In the beginning was the Word:* 'Tis but *one Word* that makes up his *whole Book*, and that *Word* is *Chriſt*.

So then, 'tis clear enough that *Chriſt* is the *onely Subject* of all four *Goſpels*; but what do the *Epiſtles* treat of? St. *Matthew*, *Mark*, *Luke* and *John* do write of *Jeſus*; but what doth St. *Paul* doe?

doe? 'Tis ſure that no Apoſtle *preached*, no Apoſtle *wrote* ſo much as he; but what's his *Subject*? The Text anſwers, *He preached Jeſus*: himſelf confirms it, *We preach not our ſelves, but Chriſt*. And as he *preached*, ſo he *wrote* too: 'tis eaſily ſeen, that in all his *Epiſtles* there are but *few* Paſſages to be found that do not one way or other relate to *Chriſt*. So that, upon the whole matter, we may ſafely ſay, as *Maldonate* doth, *Tota Scriptura Chriſtum loquitur*, The *whole* Scripture ſpeaks of *Chriſt*. So *Cornelius à Lapide* too, *Tota Scriptura pro Argumento ſuo habet Chriſtum; tota circa Chriſtum verſatur*: *All* the *Bible*, the *Old* Teſtament and the *New*, *Moſes* and the *Prophets*, the *Evangeliſts* and the *Apoſtles*, do all treat of *Chriſt*; as *Chriſt* is the *Author* of all Scriptures, ſo is he their great *Subject* matter too. And if ſo, we may well conclude, that the *whole* Bible is, what the Text ſtyles it, ὁ λόγος τοῦ Χριστοῦ, the *Word of Chriſt*. And ſince 'tis ſo, theſe Inferences will undeniably follow.

Act. 9. 20. 2 Cor. 4. 5. *Maldon.* in Luc. 24. 27. *Cornel à Lap.* in Heb. 10. 7.

I. That the Scriptures have in them more of *Excellence*, *Wiſedom*, *Purity* and *Holineſs*, then *any* or *all* other Writings whatſoever. COROL. LARIES.

Indeed, there may be, and certainly is, *ſomewhat* of worth in many other books beſides: 'tis poſſible ſometimes to find *Gold* among *rubbiſh*, and a *Jewel* may lie upon a *dunghill*. That there are many things of great uſe in *Humane*, nay, in *Heatheniſh*, Authours, no ſober perſon, that reads and underſtands them, will deny. So excellent are the Writings of *Plato*, that I find him ſtyled *alter Moſes*, a *ſecond Moſes*; and the Ancients commonly ſurname him θεῖος Πλάτων, *Plato* the *Divine*. Such are the *Morals* of *Plutarch*, (a man ſtyled πάσης φιλοσοφίας Ἀφροδίτη,

Cal. Rhodig. Antiquit. l. 30. c. 37.

the *Venus* of all *Philosophy*) that it was judged the fittest book to be preserved, if all books were to be burnt but *one*. Nay, so choise an Authour is that very Poet *Homer*, that *Dionysius* calleth him Δαιμονιώτατος, most Divine. And methinks that little Poem of *Pythagoras* deserves its name, and those few lines of his are justly styled Ἔπη χρυσᾶ, Verses of *Gold*.

What great use may be made of Heathenish *Moralists*, *Historians* and *Poets*, we learn from those great Examples and learned men, the Primitive *Fathers*, *Justine Martyr*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Origen*, *Epiphanius*, &c. and amongst the Latins, *Tertullian*, *Austine*, *Hierom*, *Cyprian*, *Lactantius*, and many others, who overthrew the Idolatry of the Gentiles, and convinced the Nations of their abominable Superstitions and Practices, by the clear *Testimonies* of their *own* Writers. And in so doing these great Luminaries of the Christian Church did but follow the Example of St. *Paul*; who, to convince *Pagans* and Infidels, took Arguments from their *own* Authours, and translated some Verses of *Callimachus*, *Epimenides*, *Menander*, and *Aratus*, into the Word of God, and thereby made them *sacred*. And doubtless there is a great truth in that expression of *Scultetus*, *Fructuosè ancillantur Sacris*, &c. The Testimonies of Humane Authours do contribute a great deal towards the Confirmation of many Truths, and the better understanding of the Oracles of God.

Scultetus de Quæstione, Utrùm Theologo, &c.

And if there be such a worth in the writings of *other* Authours, who were but *Men*; what value shall we set upon the *Scripture*, which is the undoubted Word of *God*? If the Laws of *Solon* be

be choiſe; what is the Law of *Moſes*? If the *Ethicks* of *Ariſtotle*, *Epictetus*, *Hieroeles*, *Cicero*, *Seneca*, and many others, be excellent; what then are the *Proverbs* of *Solomon*? If the *Diſcourſes* of *Plato* be Heavenly; what then are the *Sermons* of *Chriſt*? Nay, if the *Epiſtles* of St. *Auſtine*, St. *Hierom*, St. *Bernard*, and other Fathers, be even Divine; what are St. *Paul*'s then? Remember, other Writings are but the Writings of *Men*; but theſe are *God*'s: other Books at beſt contain but the word of ſuch and ſuch a *Saint*; whereas our Bible contains λόγον Χριστοῦ, the *Word* of *Chriſt*.

II. That every man ſtands obliged readily and firmly to *believe* whatever the Scriptures contain and *aſſert* to be a *Truth*.

I remember, St. *Paul* demands of *Agrippa*, *Believeſt thou the Prophets?* and our Bleſſed *Saviour* himſelf demands of *Martha*, *Believeſt thou this?* Certainly, were not man grown ſtrangely ſottiſh, ſuch demands as theſe would have no place: and yet methinks 'tis a ſtranger Queſtion which *Chriſt* put to the *Jews*, *How ſhall ye believe my words?* But what ſhould hinder? Is it poſſible for man to pretend any reaſon why the *words* of *Chriſt* ſhould be ſo much as once ſuſpected? So great is his *Authority*, ſo unqueſtionable is his *Veracity*, that his bare affirmation is a ſure ground of Faith. Thus the Evangeliſt, *The man believed the word.* But what moved him ſo to doe? the Text anſwers, and aſſigns this *Reaſon* of his faith, *The man believed the word that Jeſus had ſpoken.* And ſuch is every word which our Bibles contain; 'tis the *Word* of *Jeſus*: and, upon that ſcore, if we are the Diſciples of *Jeſus*, we ſtand obliged to doe what his other

Act. 26. 27.

Joh. 11. 26.

Joh. 5. 47.

Joh. 4. 50.

Joh. 2. 22. ther Diſciples formerly did, *They believed the Scripture, and the word which Jeſus had ſaid.* The truth is, the *whole* Scripture is nothing elſe but a Syſteme of Words and Sentences which *Jeſus* hath *ſaid* and cauſed to be *written:* and if ſo, there is not a *Verſe*, there is not a *Line* to be found, but requires and deſerves our *Faith.* See this eſpecially in three Particulars.

1. Since the whole Scripture is undoubtedly the *Word* of *Chriſt*, we are obliged to *believe* it in all the matter of *Hiſtory* which is contained therein.

There are indeed ſuch and ſuch Hiſtoricall Narrations found in the Prophets, Evangeliſts and Apoſtles, ſo *ſtrange* and miraculous, that, were they found in *any* Book beſides, we might perhaps without any blame *ſuſpect* the *Writers* Faith, and warrantably *ſuſpend* our *own.* Did we reade in *Herodotus* what we reade in *Moſes*, that this glorious fabrick of Heaven and Earth was created without any more adoe then onely this, וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים, *And God ſaid*, Let there be this and that; where is the man that, barely upon ſuch an Authority, would believe it? Had *Plutarch* written the Life of *Moſes*, as he did the Lives of *Greeks* and *Romans*; had he recorded the wonderfull Works of God in *Egypt*, at the Red *Sea*, and in the *Wilderneſs*; had he told us of a *Rod* that became a *Serpent*, of *Waters* that were conſolidated into a *Wall*, of *Rocks* that were rarefied and melted into Wells, of *Bread* dropped down from *Heaven*, the Taſt whereof was gratefull to the * *various* Palates of every one that ate it: or, had *Ovid* told us, and onely he, or ſome other Authour like him, that

* *Unicuique Manna ſecundùm propriam voluntatem in ore ſapiebat,* Aug. *in Ep.* 118.

the

the whole World was once *drowned* with *water*, and ſhall one day be *burnt* with *fire*; that a *Woman* was turned into *Salt*; that a *King* became a *Beaſt*, and fed on graſs like an Oxe: had *he* told us, that the *Chariot* of the *Sun*, that wheels round the world with ſo *ſtrong* and quick a Motion, *ſtood ſtill* at one time, and *went back* at another: or, had ſome *Humane* Authour, who is of the greateſt Credit, told us, what the Prophet *Daniel* peremptorily doth, namely, that a man was caſt into a *Den* of *hungry* Lions, and yet remained *untouched*; that three perſons were thrown into a flaming *Furnace*, that was heated ſeven times more then ordinary on purpoſe to conſume them, and yet remained not onely *unburnt*, but even *unſindged* too: or, had any *ſuch Writer* told us, what the *Evangeliſt* doth, *The blind receive their ſight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleanſed, the deaf hear, the dead are raiſed up*: *Such* ſtories as theſe, had they been delivered by any *humane* and *vulgar* Authour, muſt needs have exceeded *all* the *faith* of the moſt *credulous* perſon which the whole World affords. Matt. 11. 5.

But although theſe Stories to carnall Reaſon may ſeem very *ſtrange* and improbable; though the matter of *fact* be in it ſelf ſo *hard* and difficult, that it doth rather *diſcourage* then *induce* us to believe them: yet ſince we find theſe things expreſly and clearly delivered in our moſt *holy Writ*; ſince we find them ſtrongly atteſted by *Prophets*, *Evangeliſts* and *Apoſtles*; we cannot, with any ſhew of Reaſon, without a great deal of guilt and ſin, not onely *deny* our *Aſſent*, but even ſo much as *ſuſpend* our *Faith*: and that becauſe the whole

Scripture, which contains theſe hiſtoricall Narrations how ſtrange ſoever, is λόγος Χριστοῦ, the *Word* of *Chriſt*, that *Chriſt* who did not, will not, can not lie.

2. Since the whole Scripture is undoubtedly the *Word* of *Chriſt*, we are obliged to *believe* it in all the *Promiſes* which it contains.

What thoſe Promiſes are, St. *Peter* tells us; 2 Pet. 1. 4. *Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promiſes.* The Promiſes of God are exceeding *great* in their *number*, and exceeding *precious* in their *nature* too: there is not any *one* amongſt them but is of more reall value then the *whole* world beſides: ſo many, ſo ſweet, ſo excellent are they, that a poor humble ſoul, who hath the greateſt Intereſt in them, ſcarce knoweth how to believe them; as if they were *too good* to be true. That an offended God, upon the ſhedding of a few penitentiall Tears, upon a little Humiliation, Contrition and Reformation, which cannot poſſibly make the leaſt Satisfaction for thoſe frequent Injuries which man hath done him, ſhould ever be ſo gracious, as to promiſe him that ſignal and ineſtimable Bleſſing, even the full Remiſſion of all thoſe Tranſgreſſions, which would otherwiſe have certainly damned him for ever! That, upon the Submiſſion of a Sinner, God Almighty ſhould promiſe to advance that Rebell to a *Throne*, whom he might have juſtly laid in that *infernall Gaol*, to be wrapped up in flames and chains of darkneſs, and that for ever! That upon ſome few Acts of ſuch and ſuch an inconſiderable ſervice, which adds nothing to the ever-bleſſed Majeſty of Heaven, the Great God ſhould

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promiſe no leſs a Reward then an immortall *Crown* of *Glory*! Certainly, were ſuch Promiſes as theſe reported by ſome *mere man* like our ſelves, nay more, were they delivered to us barely by an *Angel* from Heaven, they would not eaſily be believed. For, when ſome dejected and contrite Soul doth ſeriouſly conſider with it ſelf the *dreadfull nature* of its *Sin*, the *worthleſneſs* of its *Repentance*, the manifold *imperfections* and ſmall value even of its *higheſt* Services, it can hardly enter into its head, that the *one* ſhould ſo eaſily be *forgiven*, and the *other* ſo highly *rewarded*.

But although the Sinner, from the ſad *apprehenſion* of his own *Guilt*, and his great *Unworthineſs* of thoſe unvaluable *Privileges* which are the Subject matter of the grand *Promiſes* of the Goſpell, may find in *himſelf* juſt cauſe to *fear* their *Performance*: yet when he ſeriouſly conſiders *whoſe* Promiſes they are, and *where* they ſtand recorded, he hath far greater reaſon to conclude their full Accompliſhment. St. *Paul* tels us, *He that hath promiſed is faithfull*: and again, *All the promiſes of God in Chriſt are Yea and Amen.* True it is, Man is but a poor *Worm*, a *Sinner*, a *Rebel*, unworthy to ſhare in thoſe glorious Promiſes that ſtand recorded in our Bibles: but what then? ſhall we take occaſions from the *Demerits* of *Man* to ſuſpect and queſtion the *Truth* and Faithfulneſs of *God*? We muſt acknowledge that Promiſes of *Pardon*, *Life*, *eternal* Bliſſe and *Glory*, are ſuch mighty things as *paſs* our *Underſtanding*; but muſt they therefore *exceed* our *Faith*? Methinks it ſhould be as eaſie for us to *believe* them as it is to *reade* them. Certainly, if there be nothing *too great*

Heb. 10. 23. 2 Cor. 1. 20.

for God to *promise*, there is nothing *too hard* for God to *doe*: whatever good words his *Mercy* hath made him speak, his *Power* and his Truth confirms: and for all this we have the *Great Charter* of Heaven, a *sure word* of Prophecy, even that blessed Security, which is λόγος Χριστοῦ, the *Word* of *Christ*. But,

3. Since the whole Scripture is undoubtedly the *Word* of *Christ*, we are obliged to *believe* it in all the *Threatnings* which it contains.

That the various Menaces recorded in Holy Writ are indeed most *dreadfull* things, whosoever doth but *reade* them must presently acknowledg.
Ezek. 18. 4. The Prophet tells us, *The soul that sinneth, it shall die*. What a sad condition then is the incorrigible
Ps. 9. 17. Sinner in! The Psalmist tells us, *The wicked shall be turned into Hell*. A *dismal* sentence surely! And, what is worse, the Evangelist, the very
Apoc. 20. 10. *Gospel* tells us too, *They shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever*. What a *killing* word is this! So terrible are these and many other Comminations which we find most plainly delivered in our Bibles, that of all the Passages recorded therein these are they which man is most unwilling to believe. As for our scoffing *Atheist*, he is loath to believe that there is any such *Being* as an holy *God*, to call him to a strict account in *another* world for what he hath done in *this*; he will not be convinced that there is a most glorious *Heaven* to invite him to Holiness, or a most dreadfull *Hell* to scare him from Sin. And as for other ordinary Sinners, how apt are they to *create* themselves a *God* made up of nothing else but *Compassions*, Bowels and Mercy onely? They reade indeed such and such dismal Sentences denounced, in God's name, by his

his Prophets, Evangeliſts and Apoſtles; but withall they look upon them but as ſo many μορμολυκεῖα, *Bugbears* and *Scarecrows* onely. They cannot imagine that it is conſiſtent with the *Goodneſs* of God, no nor with his *Juſtice* neither, to put ſuch ſad Threatnings of his in *execution*. For, ſay they, what great *injury* doth a little Sin doe to God, that he ſhould ever think of ſuch a ſtrange Revenge? When a man enjoys the pleaſure of his Luſt, what harm thereby can he doe his Maker? If God be not one jot the *better* for all our *Services*, can he be ſo much the *worſe* for our *Miſcarriages*, as to puniſh us ſo *ſeverely*, and that for *ever*? Is it imaginable, that for ſuch and ſuch Offences, committed in a *ſhort* ſpace of time, a God, that hath proclaimed himſelf ſo *Good* and Gracious, ſhould revenge himſelf upon a poor inconſiderable *worm* by inflicting the moſt *tremendious* Torments, and thoſe *everlaſting* too? Yea, ſo reaſons the fooliſh *Heart* of *man*: but what ſay the Wiſedom and the *Oracles* of God? *Theſe ſhall go away into* Matt. 25. 46. *everlaſting puniſhment*; ſo ſaith one Evangeliſt: *Their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched*; Mar. 9. 44. ſo ſaith another: *I am tormented in this flame*; Luk. 16. 24. ſo writes a third. Now, whatever the Sinner may *dream* to the deluſion and ruine of his immortal Soul, all theſe Expreſſions, and many more of a like nature, are expreſly delivered in our Bibles, and ſo require our Faith; we find them in the *Old* Teſtament, we find them in the *New*: and if ſo, we are obliged moſt readily and firmly to *believe* them, becauſe *both* theſe *Teſtaments*, even our *Law* and our *Goſpel*, are λόγ☉ Χριſτ☉, the *Word*, the *infallible Word*, of *Chriſt*.

III. Since the whole Scripture is undoubtedly the *Word* of *Chriſt*, we are obliged to *obey* it in all the *Commands* which it contains.

'Tis not enough to give *credit* to the Holy Scripture in whatever it *ſaith*, but we muſt alſo yield an univerſal *Obedience* to every thing that it doth *require*. For, as every *Aſſertion* contained in Sacred Writ, as being the *Word of Chriſt*, deſerves our *Belief*, in reſpect of his *Truth* and *Faithfulneſs*: ſo every *Precept* delivered therein, as being *the Word of the ſame Chriſt*, expects our *Obedience*, in reſpect of his abſolute *Sovereignty* and *Dominion*. See this in two Particulars.

1. Since the whole Scripture is undoubtedly the *Word* of *Chriſt*, we muſt *obey* it in all its *Poſitive* Laws, by *doing* whatever it doth *require*.

There are indeed many *ſevere* Commands which the Scriptures lay upon us: ſuch *Injunctions* hath the *Law* impoſed, and ſuch *Duties* doth the very *Goſpel* exact, as are quite *contrary* to the corrupt *Inclinations* of humane Nature, and conſequently ſeem exceeding *harſh* to Fleſh and bloud. Such was that unexpected Command of God to
Gen. 22. 2. *Abraham, Take thy ſon, thine onely ſon Iſaac, whom thou loveſt, and offer him up for a burnt-offering.*
Deut. 32. 49. Such another was that to *Moſes, Go up to mount Nebo, and die.* And ſuch is that recorded by the
Matt. 5. 29. Evangeliſt, *If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out,*
Luk. 18. 22. &c. and again, *Sell all that thou haſt, and diſtribute to the poor*, &c. Certainly theſe and many other like Commands, at the very firſt hearing, ſound exceeding *harſh* and ſo ſevere, that were they impoſed by any perſon of but *ordinary* Authority, man would rather *hazard* his *diſpleaſure*, then

obey

obey his *will* by doing that which, in his own apprehenſion, doth ſo much tend to his Diſadvantage. Should a *man*, like our ſelves, require us, upon the *firſt* wanton Glance of our deareſt Eye, to pluck it out, rather then run the danger of a *ſecond*; ſhould any *man*, like our ſelves, command us to *loſe* the *greateſt Eſtate*, rather then *deny* or *diſſemble* the *ſmalleſt Truth*; ſhould any *worldly* Power enjoyn us to lie in the flame our *ſelves*, rather then caſt a little *Incenſe* into it; where dwells the man that would not diſobey?

But although the *matter* of ſeveral Commands be ſo *diſtaſtfull* to fleſh and bloud, and ſeems ſo *contrary* to that which man is apt to count his great *Intereſt* in the world, that, with ſome little plauſibility and pretences of carnal Reaſon, it is wont to diſcourage and retard our *Obedience*: yet the due conſideration of that *Authority*, Dominion, Wiſedome and Goodneſs which hath impoſed theſe Commands, even the *ſevereſt* of them, ſhould *excite* and quicken us to obey. We are ſtrictly charged to *renounce* the *World*, ſo far at leaſt as it ſtands in competition with its Maker: and if this ſeem a difficult task, let us remember *who* it is that hath enjoyned it. We are bid to *mortifie* our *members*, to *crucifie* our *old* man, to *ſubdue* and kill our deareſt *luſts*: and if theſe and the like injunctions do not *pleaſe* us, yet let us conſider *where* they are recorded. There is not a man amongſt us but doth avouch and own *Chriſt* to be his *Lord*, and the *Scripture* to be his *Rule*: and if ſo, ſince all theſe Commands, how *diſpleaſing* ſoever to the nature of man, are *impoſed* by this *Lord*, and *contained* within this *Holy Writ*; 'tis certain that we

we ſtand obliged, by all that *Service* and Homage we ow our *Lord*, and by all that *reſpect* we pretend to every *Sacred Text*, to obey even the moſt unwelcom Precepts, by *doing* whatever is *required* in any *page* or *line* which contains λόγον Χριστοῦ, the *Word* of *Chriſt*.

2. Since the whole Scripture is undoubtedly the *Word* of *Chriſt*, we are all obliged to *obey* it in all its *Negative* Precepts, by *forbearing* whatſoever it doth *forbid*.

'Tis not enough for the Servants of *Chriſt* to perform thoſe *Duties* which his Laws *require*; but we muſt not meddle with any *Sin* which they do *prohibit*. 'Tis indeed very eaſie to believe, that there are ſeveral *Prohibitions* found in Holy writ that do as much *oppoſe* man's worldly *Intereſt*, and *croſſe* his corrupt *Inclinations*, as many of its *Poſitive Commands*. So *licentious* is the nature of man, that it makes him impatient of all *Reſtraints*. We are grown like ſome *fiery* horſes, that will endure a *Spur* rather then a *Bridle*; that never *fret* and foam ſo much as when they are ſtrongly *curbed*. 'Tis ſomewhat hard to determine whether Sins of *Commiſſion* or of *Omiſſion* be the greater: whether that man bids the *higher* defiance to the Majeſty of Heaven who *neglects* what the Great *God requires*; or he who *doeth* what the ſame *God forbids*. Nor is it eaſie to ſay, whether the perverſe Will of man doth more incline him to *diſobey* ſuch and ſuch *Poſitive Laws*, or to *violate* ſuch and ſuch ſtrict *Prohibitions*. 'Tis ſure that God's *Poſitive* Commands do frequently *require* from us ſuch and ſuch things which do by no means *pleaſe* us: and 'tis as ſure that the *Prohibitions* of God do *reſtrain* and

and give us *check* in those things which our corrupt nature doth *hugely like* and love. When God Almighty gives us this Prohibition, *Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against thy neighbour*, doubtlesse he layeth upon us as hard a Task as when he *exacts* from us this or that. Lev. 19. 18.

But however, though God Almighty be pleased by his *Negative* Precepts to cross our corrupt Inclinations, to tie up our hands and chain our irregular and extravagant Affections; though the Scriptures *deny* us those matters which we fain would *enjoy*; though we must not *doe* what we infinitely *desire*; though we must not *have* what we strangely *long* for: yet notwithstanding we must gladly suffer our selves to be over-ruled, we must readily and chearfully submit to the *Wisedom* and *Pleasure* of God in all this; being well assured, that there is no one *Prohibition*, that doth concern us, but is a part of that holy Writ which is λόγος Χριστοῦ, the *Word* of *Christ*.

IV. Since the whole Scripture is undoubtedly the *Word* of *Christ*, we are all obliged to *reade* and *hear* it with that *Attention*, *Meekness*, *Fear* and *Reverence*, that well becomes *it* and *us*; it to *receive*, and us to *shew*.

What a great deal of Respect the *ancient* Servants of God have expressed towards the *Holy Writ*, is sufficiently evident from those *reverential Gestures* of body that have been used both by the *Minister* that read, and the *People* that heard. What Posture the *Minister*, who *read* the Word, was wont to use, the Scriptures tell us; *They stood, and read in the book of the Law*. Our *Saviour* himself did so in the Synagogue, *He stood up for to reade*. Neh. 9. 3. Luke 4. 16.

Act. 13. 16. And thus St. *Paul*, *He stood up, and said.* 'Tis the observation of St. *Chrysostom*, Ἔθος ἦν τοῦτο Ἰουδαίοις, It was the constant Custom of the *Jews* so to doe. True it is, the persons who *expounded* the Law did sometimes *sit*. Thus our Blessed *Saviour*, when he began to make his *Sermon*, 'tis said, ἐκάθισε, he *sate down*: and from his example, the *Primitive* Bishops ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ καθέζοντο λόγον ποιέμενοι, *sate* in the Church and *preached*. But as for the ὁ Ἀναγνώστης, the person that *read*, his constant custom was to *stand*.

Chrysost. in locum.

Clem. l. 2. Constitut. c. 11. *Grotius* in Matt. 23. 2.

But what then? Suppose that not onely the *Reader* of the Law but its *Expounders* too had for ever been accustomed and obliged to *stand*, yet what *Reverence* doth this import? 'Tis certain that amongst the *Nations* of the World, *mos erat Oratorum stare*, it was the general practice of *Orators* to *stand* and speak. Amongst the *Romans* it was not onely *Tully*'s *Practice*, but his *Advice* too: *Oratoris status sit erectus*, Let an Oratour *stand* erect and upright when-ever he makes a speech. It was thus amongst the *Grecians* too. How oft doth *Homer* introduce such and such a person ἀναστάντα, rising and *standing* up to speak? His excellent Commentatour tells us, οὕτω ἦν ἔθος παλαιοῖς, καὶν βασιλεῖς ὦσιν· Amongst the Ancients, if the *King* himself made an Oration, notwithstanding his Majesty, he was to *stand* up and speak. The reason of this Custom the same Authour gives us thus, ὡς ἂν ἔχοιεν τὸς κύκλῳ ἐπιστέφειν, καὶ ὑπὸ πάντων ἐξίσης ἀκούεσθαι· and thus *Grotius* too, *ut rectius ab omni cœtu exaudirentur*; The *Speaker*, who-ever he were, *stood* up, that he might be the better *heard* by the whole Assembly.

Tacitus Dial. de Oratoribus. *Ludovicus de la Cerda* in Virgil. Æn. 6. *Cicero* de Orat.

Eustathius Il. α'. p. 46.

But

But certainly, beſides this *Convenience* of the People's better hearing, there was ſome farther reaſon why the *Miniſter*, who *read* or *preached* the Word, did rather *ſtand* then *ſit*: and what that was, *Carthuſian* gueſſeth well; *ut Concioni ipſi honorem impertirentur*; or, as *Lorinus* words it, *reverentiæ cauſâ*: They *ſtood* to teſtifie what a *reverential* reſpect they had for that holy Word which they delivered. *Lorinus* in Act. 1. 15. & 13. 16.

And, doubtleſſe, upon the ſelf-ſame account did the *People ſtand* to *hear* too. Such was the Cuſtom in the Church of the *Jews*. So the Scriptures tell us, *Ezra opened the book in the ſight of all the people; and when he opened it, all the people ſtood up: recti ſteterunt*, they ſtood upright; ſo *Vatablus*. *Grotius* obſerves, that the *whole Aſſembly* ſtood *dum ipſa Legis verba legebantur*, whilſt the expreſs letter of the Law was in reading: and he tells us out of the *Talmud*, that this Practice continued in the *Jewiſh* Church even till our *Saviour*'s time; *Ad tempora Gamalielis ſtantes didicêre Legem*, Till *Gamaliel*'s time they *ſtood* whilſt they learnt the Law. And as the *Jews* ſtood whilſt the *Law* was read, ſo did the Primitive *Chriſtians* whilſt the *Goſpel* was pronounced too; and particularly that περικοπὴ, that ſelect Portion of the Evangeliſts which we now commonly call by that name. This Ceremony of *ſtanding* up at the Goſpel is *laudable* in it *ſelf*, and *venerable* for its *Antiquity* too. The firſt Conſtitution of it is aſcribed by ſome to *Clemens*; but by moſt to *Anaſtaſius*, the firſt of that name, who was not *Pope*, but *Biſhop*, of *Rome*. Nay, ſuch a reverential Reſpect had the Servants of God for his Word, and every Part thereof, that, as the *Jews* Neh. 8. 5.

stood at the reading of the *Law*, and the *Christians* generally at the pronouncing of the *Gospel*; so *Microl. c. 9.* the *Greek* Churches, as *Micrologus* tells us, were wont to stand *ad lectiones Apostolicas*, even when the *Epistles* were read too.

And lest all this Respect to the *Word* of *God* should seem too little, they thought fit to testifie what great *Reverence* they had for the Holy Scriptures by standing up, not onely whilst they were *read*, but whilst they were *expounded* too. Thus *Lorinus in Act. 1. 15.* *Lorinus*, *Anditam olim à stantibus Concionem*, &c. The people of old stood, not onely whilst the *Psalms* and *Chapters* were read, but whilst the *Sermon* was preached. Nor was this Posture used out of *necessity*, but from their own *election* and choice. They who thus *stood* at the *Sermon* were not onely men of *low* degree, who perhaps might *want* a convenient place to sit; but even the *noblest* Persons, who might have commanded what *Euseb. de Vita Constant. l. 4. c. 33.* *Seats* they pleased. Thus *Eusebius* reports of *Constantine* the Great, Ὡς δὲ ἤκουσε καὶ τοῖς λοιποῖς ἐπικρούπτο· When he heard the *Sermon*, he *stood* as well as the meanest person there. Nay, he would by no means be *intreated* to sit down: so saith the Historian, ἡμῶν ἀντιβολούντων ὅπῃ παρακειμένῳ τῷ βασιλικῷ θρόνῳ διαπαύσεται, ἐπείθετο μὲν οὐδαμῶς· the *Bishop* even *begged* of him to *sit* down and ease himself upon a Royal *Throne*, that was there placed purposely for him; but he would by no means use it. But what was his reason? why would he not *sit*? did he chuse to *stand* barely out of *courtesie* and complement to the *Bishop* or the whole Assembly? did he *stand* barely to evidence his Humility and *Condescension* towards his *People*? No; himself gives us another reason

reaſon for it, Ἑστῶτας ὑπακούειν τῶν θείων ὅσιον· To *ſtand* whilſt we hear the Oracles of God, is no more then what *Religion* it ſelf commands us. Such was the *Judgment* and ſuch was the *Practice* of this renowned and glorious Emperour. And yet leſt this expreſſion of Reverence towards the Word of God ſhould prove too ſhort, ſome *higher* ones have been uſed. I remember what *Cornelius à Lapide* ſaith of *Charles Borromæus*, Biſhop of *Milan*, *Sacram Scripturam, ultimis vitæ ſuæ annis, non niſi nudo capite & flexis genibus venerabundus lectitavit*, he read not the Holy Scripture, no not in his *Old* age, but with a *bare head* and a *bended knee.* *Corn. à Lap.* in Epiſt. ad Hovium.

Such hath been the Devotion of Saints in *former Ages* and *other Churches:* but how ſtands the caſe with *us* this day? What high *Eſteem*, what inward *Veneration* have we for *God*'s Holy *Word?* Alas! 'tis but ſad to conſider, that the generality of Chriſtians do commonly reade and hear the *Word* with leſſe regard then the profane Sinner reads his *Romance* or *Play-book.* We hear the Sermon as if it were but an ordinary Diſcourſe, *trivial* in it ſelf, and of *no* great Concern to *us.* 'Tis certain that the looſeneſs of our deportment and carriage in the Houſe of God, where the Scriptures are ſolemnly read and preached, is an infallible Symptom of our great *Irreverence*, and doth moſt ſurely betray the curſed Indifference and *Slightneſs* of our ſpirits. But let us remember what our *Saviour* himſelf commands us, *Take heed how ye hear.* 'Tis impoſſible to *hear* with *too* much *Caution*; we cannot *reade* with *too* great *Reverence:* and amongſt many Reaſons this is one, That Luke 8. 18.

blessed Word which we reade and hear is λόγος Χριστοῦ, the *Word* of *Christ*.

V. Since the whole Scripture is undoubtedly the *Word* of *Christ*, let us consider how much to blame the *Roman Church* is in *equalling* their *Traditions* to it, yea and in *preferring* them before it too.

That the *Roman Church* should endeavour by all possible means to keep up and vigorously assert the *Credit* of their *Traditions*, we cannot wonder; because they have no other way to maintain several *Doctrines* of theirs, which they are loath to part with, and yet can never prove them by the Written Word. Their Doctrines of *Indulgences* and *Purgatory* are so advantageous to them, that *Chemnitius* hath adventured to say, *Cælum potiùs quàm Purgatorium sibi eripi paterentur*, They would rather part with *Heaven* then with *Purgatory*. And since this Doctrine is so *dear* to them, who can blame them for magnifying those *Traditions* of theirs, by which alone this and several other gainful Doctrines of their Church are countenanced and supported?

Chemnit. Exam. Concil. Trident.

What a great Esteem they have for their Traditions, we learn from their own Authours. Methinks *Cornelius à Lapide* ventures somewhat high, when he tells us, *Lex Tradita æquè obligat atque Lex Scripta*, The *Traditional* Law doth oblige as much as the *Written*. That of *Aquinas* saith the same; *Traditiones Religione unà cum Scripturis sunt tenendæ*, *Traditions* are to be observed with the *self-same* Veneration as the *Scriptures* themselves. But what need I mention particular persons, when the *Conventicle* of *Trent*, which, being appro

Cornel. à Lap. in 1 Cor. 11. 2.

approved by the *Pope*, is owned by them as the Repreſentative Body of their whole Church, hath proclaimed their Determination in this matter to all the World by this Expreſſion; *Traditiones ac Scripturas ipſas pari pietatis affectu & reverentiâ ſuſcipit ac veneratur SS. Synodus Tridentina*, The Holy Council of *Trent* doth receive and reverence ſuch and ſuch *Traditions* with the *ſelf-ſame Reſpect* and Devotion which it hath for the *Scriptures* themſelves? Concil. Tridٰent. Seſſion. 4.

This Expreſſion of thoſe few *Romiſh* Biſhops that were now convened at *Trent* ſounds ſomewhat high: and yet methinks *Bellarmine*, as if he were *above* the Council, and willing to ſhew himſelf rather *Pope* then *Cardinal*, outgoeth the *Canon* of *Trent*, and braves it thus; *Quædam ſunt Traditiones majores quoad Obligationem quàm quædam Scripturæ*, There are ſome *Traditions* that lay upon us a *greater* Obligation then ſome parts of the *Written Word*. It were worth the while to enquire a little what thoſe *Traditions* ſhould be that are more *binding* then *Scripture* it ſelf. We cannot reaſonably imagine, that ſuch a man as *Bellarmine*, that *Illuſtriſſimus Cardinalis*, ſhould be ſo fond of any Traditions that are merely *Eccleſiaſticall*, as to tell the world, that the Church, or any Member thereof, ſtands more obliged by *theſe* then by ſuch and ſuch *Texts* of *Law* or *Goſpell*. No, 'tis the ingenuous Confeſſion of this Illuſtrious *Cardinall*, that *Eccleſiaſticall Traditions* are nothing elſe but *Conſuetudines quædam antiquæ, vel à Prælatis vel à Populo inchoatæ, quæ paulatim, tacito Conſenſu populorum, vim Legis obtinuerunt*, certain *ancient Cuſtomes*, begun either by the *Prelates* Bellarminus de Verbo non ſcripto, l. 4. c. 7. De Verbo non ſcripto, l. 4. c. 2.

or-

or the *People*, which by degrees, through the People's *tacit Conſent*, obtained the force of *Laws*. And certainly, that ſuch Traditions as are acknowledged to be from *men*, whether the *Laiety* or the *Clergy*, *Councils* or *Popes*, ſhould ever be thought *more binding* then ſuch and ſuch Portions of *Scripture*, which the whole Chriſtian Church doth own and confeſs to be the infallible *Word* of *God*, ſhould not eaſily be affirmed. We muſt therefore grant, that thoſe Traditions which *Bellarmine* aſſerts to be more obliging then ſome Portions of Scripture muſt be of at leaſt an *equall Authority* with the *written Word*; which cannot be maintained without plain and *equall Proofs*, that ſuch Traditions are *Divine* or *Apoſtolicall*.

That our Bleſſed *Saviour* and his *Apoſtles* might *doe* many *Miracles* that are not written, we are not afraid to grant: That our Bleſſed *Saviour* and his *Apoſtles* might *preach* many *Sermons*, and deliver ſeveral Diſcourſes, which are not upon Record, we are not unwilling to acknowledg: There might indeed be ſeverall *Sayings* of our *Lord*'s omitted by the Evangeliſts, as well as that mentioned by

Act. 20. 35. St. *Paul*, *Remember the words of our Lord Jeſus, how he ſaid, It is more bleſſed to give then to receive.* *Lorinus* obſerves, *Non exſtat in Evangeliis iſta Sententia, ſed Apoſtolorum ore circumferebatur*, This Sentence of our Bleſſed *Saviour*'s is nowhere *recorded* in the Goſpel, but was delivered by his Apoſtles by *orall Tradition*. And perhaps that other Sentence aſcribed to *Chriſt*, though nowhere written in our Bibles, might notwithſtanding be *his* too; *Nunquam læti ſitis, niſi cùm fratrem veſtrum videritis in Charitate*, Be never merry,

Lorinus in locum.

merry, but onely then when ye ſee your Brother in Charity. Theſe and ſome few more Sentences, not found in Sacred Writ, are imputed to our Bleſſed *Saviour*: and ſo is that too, by ſome to *Chriſt*, by others to ſome *Apoſtle*, Γίνεσθε δόκιμοι τραπεζῖται, Be skilfull Exchangers: which words are ſtyled in *Euſebius* φωνὴ Ἀποστολικὴ, an *Apoſtolicall expreſſion*. *Euſeb.* Hiſt. l. 7. cap. 7.

And the truth is, that the *Apoſtles* might receive from *Chriſt*, betwixt his *Reſurrection* and *Aſcenſion*, directions to ordain *Rites* and *Ceremonies*, that concerned the Adminiſtration of God's publick Worſhip and the exteriour Diſcipline of the Church: and that theſe *Orders* and Determinations of his touching the Circumſtances of God's Service were delivered to their Succeſſours by *word* of *mouth*, and were not preſently regiſtred, we are not forward, nor indeed any whit *concerned*, to deny. But withall, the *Church* of *Rome* ſtands much obliged to prove, and that with *clear Evidence* and unqueſtionable Authority, that thoſe *preſent Traditions* of theirs which they do ſo ſtifly contend for, *equall* to, and in ſome caſes *prefer* before, the *written Word*, are indeed thoſe *very Traditions* which were recommended to the Church by *Chriſt* or his *Apoſtles*.

This, I confeſs, the *Romaniſts* do *pretend* and promiſe to doe: but if they fail, what then? 'Tis the confident expreſſion of *Bellarmine*, *Non eſt Audaciæ æquare aliquid non ſcriptum Verbo Scripto*; 'Tis no *ſawcy* thing at all to equall ſomething *unwritten* to that Word which is *written*: nor doth he think that expreſſion of his too bold, *Traditio ſola ſufficit, Scripturæ non ſufficiunt*; *Tradition* *Bellarm.* de Verbo Dei non ſcripto, l. 4. c. 3.

alone is enough, but the *Scriptures alone* are not ſufficient. Methinks ſuch perſons are much obliged to prove that theſe *Traditions* of theirs are indeed of *Divine* Authority, ſince they have a greater eſteem for them then for the known and ſure *Word* of *God*. For if it ſhould happen that theſe *Traditions*, which are ſo highly magnified, ſhould be found and proved the bare *Inventions* of men; thoſe perſons would appear ſomewhat too *bold* and ſawcy indeed who have *preferred* them before the *certain* and infallible *Decrees* of Heaven.

This *Aquinas* well underſtood, and therefore knew himſelf concerned to maintain the *Divine* Authority of thoſe *Traditions*, whereof he doth thus pronounce; *Verbum Dei bifariam dividitur, in Scripturam & Traditiones*, The *Word* of *God* is twofold, *Scripture* and *Tradition*. Thus *Bellarmine* too, who ſtyles Tradition *Verbum Dei non ſcriptum*, the unwritten Word of God. And their Conventicle of *Trent* ſaith, that their Traditions were *vel ore tenus à Chriſto, vel à Spiritu Sancto dictatæ*, delivered immediately by *Chriſt's own* mouth, or dictated by his *Holy Spirit*.

Thus doth the *Church* of *Rome* pretend a full and *Divine Authority* for ſeveral *Traditions* which they hold, though not recorded in our *Bibles*. And if this Aſſertion of theirs in favour of their *Traditions* can be proved with as *convincing* Arguments as thoſe whereby the Authority of the *Scripture* is confirmed, we ſhall with *equall* Reſpect, even as the *Romaniſts* do, embrace them both. For though it be certain, that the committing of the Word of God to *Ink* and *Paper* was an excellent

cellent means to preſerve it *entire*, and to ſecure it and us from *Frauds*, Cheats and Falſifications: yet the Members of the *Reformed Churches* have not ſo far loſt their *Religion* and *Reaſon*, as once to imagine, that the *bare writing* of the Scripture ſhould *create* and give it that *Authority* which is inherent in it. Inſomuch that if any *Traditionall Doctrine* or *Practice*, that is now taught and uſed in the *Roman Church*, can be *ſufficiently* proved to have been *originally* delivered by *Chriſt* or his *Apoſtles*, we ſhall as readily *believe* and *doe* it, as any thing elſe whatſoever that is *required* or *delivered* in any part of the *Written Word*.

But if bold and confident *Affirmations* be enough to juſtifie Unwritten *Doctrines* and *Uſages*, what *Religion*, what *Sect*, what *Hereſie* will want ſuch and ſuch Pretences to plead for the Vindication of it ſelf? 'Tis well known, that the very *Heathens* pretended that, as *Plato* words it, τὴν νόμων διάθεσιν, the *Diſpoſition* and Inſtitution of their *Laws*, ſuch eſpecially as concerned their *Religion*, how abſurd ſoever, was from *God*. It is the obſervation of *Bellarmine* himſelf, *In Alcorano paſſim legimus, ipſum Alcoranum de Cœlo à Deo miſſum*: It was, it ſeems, the pretence of that grand Impoſtour *Mahomet*, that even *his Alcoran* came down from *Heaven*, and was dictated by *God*. *Euſebius* tells us, that *Menander*, who was indeed but a *Sorcerer*, and the real *diſciple* of *Simon Magus*, did pretend himſelf to be ſent from *Heaven*. And that famous Heretick *Cerinthus*, whoſe very preſence made St. *John* fly out of the Bath, who was an Enemy to the written *Word* of *God*, did make his Followers believe, that he received his

Plato 1. de Legibus.

Bellarm. de Verbo Dei non ſcripto, l. 4. c. 4.

Doctrines, though deteſtable enough, by *Revelation* from *Angels*. But what ſober perſon gave any credit to him?

And what if the caſe ſtand thus with the *Roman Church*? what if thoſe *Traditions* which they father upon *Chriſt* and his *Apoſtles* were indeed *none* of *theirs*? Sure we are, it was ſo with thoſe ſuperſtitious *Jews*, who, in our *Saviour*'s time, owned and ſtifly maintained, as the *Papiſts* now do, a *twofold* Law, νόμον ἔγγραφον, a *written Law*, and νόμον ἄγραφον, an *unwritten Law*, or, δευτερώσεις, ſecondary Laws, Ἀκοὰς, *Hearings*, νόμον ἐν στόματι, the Law in the *mouth*, and generally ſtyled παραδόσεις, *Traditions*.

Theſe *Traditions* they received from the *great Synagogue*; that Synagogue derived them from the *Prophets*; the Prophets from the *Elders*; the Elders from *Joſhua*; *Joſhua* from *Moſes*; and *Moſes* himſelf from *God*: ſo they pretended.

But notwithſtanding theſe fair *Inſinuations* and plauſible Pretences of theirs, to render their ſuperſtitious *Rites* and *Cuſtomes* the more acceptable to the ignorant and credulous Multitude, what was indeed their *true Original* we learn from *Chriſt* and his *Evangeliſts*, who ſtyle them παραδόσεις τῶν Πατέρων, the *Traditions* of the *Fathers*; παραδόσεις Πρεσβυτέρων, the *Traditions* of the *Elders*; παραδόσεις τῶν ἀνθρώπων, the *Traditions* of *men*: and our Bleſſed *Saviour*, ſpeaking to the *Phariſees*, calleth them παραδόσεις ὑμῶν, *your Traditions*: not *Moſes* his, not the *Prophets*, not *God*'s; but your *own*.

And as it was thus in the *Jewiſh Church*, ſo may it well be in the *Roman* too: 'tis very probable, that many *Traditions* which there are aſcribed to *Chriſt*

Christ and his *Apostles* might deduce their *Original* from some *other* hand. Such *counterfeit Traditions* do we reade of, that were obtruded upon the Church in the *Apostles* names, very *early* indeed, even whilst the *Apostles* themselves were yet *alive*. So much doth that expression of St. *Paul* seem to intimate, *We beseech you, brethren, that ye be not troubled, neither by word nor by letter, as from us.* 2 Thes. 2. 2. *Grotius* tells us, *Multi fabricabant Epistolas sub Apostolorum nomine*, There were many, even in *that* Age, that *framed Epistles* in the *Apostles* names, and ascribed their false Doctrines unto them. The same trick several *Hereticks* used in succeeding Ages. *Clemens Alexandrinus* tells us, that *Basilides*, one of those Hereticks who were justly styled *Borboritæ, Cœnosi*, though he broached most detestable Doctrines, yet had the Impudence to affirm that he learnt them from *Glaucias*, whom he pretended to be the *Interpreter* of St. *Peter*. 'Tis also recorded, that *Marcion* in the Second Age of the Church, who was justly styled by *Polycarp Primogenitus Diaboli*, the *First-born* of the *Devil*, though he affirmed a *Plurality* of *Gods*, though he denied that our Blessed Saviour was, as *Ignatius* expresseth it, ἀληθῶς γεγεννημένον, ἀληθῶς καθηλωμένον, though he denied the *Verity* of *Christ*'s Humane *nature*, and consequently the *Reality* of his *Sufferings*; yet he had the face to brag, that he received these *abominable* Doctrines from the *Disciples* of St. *Matthias*. And certainly, if such damnable *Heresies* were broached thus early, and *pretended* to be received from *Apostolicall Tradition*, we have no cause so easily to comply with such and such Doctrines of the *Romish Church* which have

Chemnit. Exam. Concil. Trid. ex *Clem.* Strom. 7. *Sympson's* Eccles. Hist.

Ignatius in Epist. ad Smyrnæos.

no warrant in the *Written Word*, barely becauſe they aſſert them to be of *Divine Originall*.

But ſince an Αὐτὸς ἔφη will not doe; ſince *bare Affirmations* in matters of ſuch great Concern will not be accepted; the *Champions* of the *Roman Religion* find themſelves neceſſitated to produce ſome Proofs, which they *pretend* to be Great ones too. And amongſt them all I meet with none that offers more fair then *Bellarmine*, whoſe *Pretenſions* are ſo *plauſible*, that if he prove an *honeſt* man, and make *good* his word, this whole Diſpute will be over; and I dare engage, that the *Reformed Churches* will pay the ſelf-ſame Reſpect to *Traditions* which the *Pope* and his *Council* of *Trent* do give them. For thus he tells us, *Traditiones eas tantùm recipimus pro Apoſtolicis, quas firmis Teſtimoniis Antiquorum probare poſſumus eſſe Apoſtolicas*; We receive no *Traditions* for *Apoſtolicall*, but ſuch alone which by the *firm Teſtimonies* of the *Ancients* we can prove to be ſuch *indeed*. The *Teſtimonies* urged by *Bellarmine* and other Catholicks in behalf of their *Traditions* are drawn from *Scriptures*, *Popes*, *Councils* and *Fathers*; each of which we ſhall examine.

Bellarm. de Verbo Dei non ſcripto, l. 4. c. 3.

I. The Champions of the *Roman* Faith do pretend to prove their Traditions by ſeveral Texts of the *Written Word*; the chief whereof are theſe.

1. That Expreſſion of our Bleſſed *Saviour* to his Apoſtles recorded by the Evangeliſt is one, *I have yet many things to ſay unto you, but ye cannot bear them now*. Hence *Bellarmine* argueth thus, *Conſtat Dominum multa dixiſſe quæ non ſunt ſcripta*, 'Tis evident that our *Lord ſpake* many things that are not *written*.

Joh. 16. 12.

But

But it will be no injury to *Bellarmine*'s reputation, if we do not count him *infallible*, since he was, and would be, no more then a *Cardinall*; having begged of God, as some say, that he might never be *Pope*, lest perhaps he might probably be *damned* too; being, it seems, of the same mind with *Marcellus* the Second, who said, *Non video quomodo qui altum hunc locum tenet salvari possit*, I do not see how the man that holds this high place can possibly be *saved*.

But let us view his Argument. *Christ* said, *I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now*: What then? The *Cardinall* thus infers, 'Tis evident that our *Lord spake* many things which are not *written*. Methinks this Consequence is not necessary, nor can be proved, from this Text at least, *I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now*. All that can be gathered from this Text is onely this, That our Lord did not speak at *this time* several matters which he had to say to his Apostles, because they were not *then* fit to receive them. Yea, but the *Cardinall* farther adds, *Illa quæ promittebat Dominus se dicturum, dixit haud dubiè post Resurrectionem suam*, Those things which our *Lord promised* that he himself *would* say, without all doubt he *did* say after his Resurrection; and that St. *Luke* doth testifie thus, *He shewed himself alive to his Apostles after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.* Act. 1. 3.

Whether these things which our Blessed *Saviour* delivered to his Apostles were *afterwards recorded*

recorded by them or not, can neither be *proved* nor *denied* by any ſolid and certain Arguments, except it can firſt be infallibly known *what* his ſeveral Diſcourſes were St. *Chryſoſtom* tells us, πνευματικὰ εἶπε ῥήματα, οὐδὲν ἀνθρώπινον, *Chriſt*, at his ſeveral *Apparitions* to his Diſciples after his Reſurrection, ſpake words that ſavoured not of *man*, but of the *Spirit*. But whether any of theſe words were *written*, this general expreſſion of St. *Chryſoſtome*'s leaves us uncertain ſtill. But mark another. The Text ſaith, *He gave commandments to the Apoſtles.* But *what* Commands might they be? were *any* of them *written*, or were they *all* afterwards delivered to the Church by *Tradition?* What the great one was, St. *Chryſoſtom* tells us, Πορευθέντες μαθητεύσατε, *Go and teach all nations*, &c. and that, to be ſure, is found upon *Record.*

Act. 1. 2.

But the Truth is, that expreſſion of *Grotius* is undeniable, *Multa dedit Præcepta quæ hîc reticentur*, *Chriſt* gave the Apoſtles many Commands which the *Evangeliſt* in *that* place hath not ſet down: but can the *Romaniſts* make it out, that *no Evangeliſt*, *no Apoſtle* hath ſet them down *elſewhere?* I grant indeed, that if *Lorinus* have gueſſed right at the Subject *matter* of our Saviour's *private diſcourſes* with his Apoſtles after his Reſurrection, there is little or nothing of it in our *Bibles:* for, concerning *Chriſt*'s talk with his Diſciples, this man, as becomes a *Jeſuit* indeed, giveth us his Opinion thus, *Expoſuit Authoritatem ſummi Paſtoris, & Hierarchiam totam Eccleſiaſticam, & formas ritúſque Sacramentorum, ac inprimis Sacrificii Miſſæ cultum, & Invocationem Sanctorum, Dies feſtos*, &c. He declared the *Authority*

Lorinus in locum.

of

of the *Pope*, the whole *Hierarchy* of the *Church*, the *forms* and *rites* of the *Sacraments*, and especially the Sacrifice of the *Maſſe*, *Invocation* of *Saints*, the *Obſervation* of *Holy-days*, &c. 'Tis well gueſſed, *bold Jeſuite!* but are *theſe* indeed the *Doctrines* which our Bleſſed *Saviour*, as *Bellarmine* ſaith, *promiſed* to teach his Apoſtles after his Reſurrection? are *theſe* indeed the *Leſſons* of which *Chriſt* ſaid to his Diſciples, *Ye cannot bear them now?* The truth is, neither *Chriſt* himſelf, nor any of his *Apoſtles*, could have born *ſuch* Leſſons at *any* time whatever.

But certain it is, thoſe Doctrines which the Apoſtles could not have well *born* before *Chriſt's Paſſion*, and were therefore adjourned till after his *Reſurrection*, were, and muſt needs be, of another nature: indeed, what they were in particular, cannot certainly be known. Thus St. *Auſtine*, *Quænam iſta ſunt quæ Ipſe non dixit, temerarium eſt velle præſumere & dicere; To affirm what thoſe things were which Chriſt himſelf did not now declare, were raſh and bold. Quis noſtrûm dicat, iſta vel illa ſunt? Who of us can tell whether it were this or that?* And yet for all this, whatever St. *Auſtine* thinks, that Jeſuite *Maldonate*, as if he *knew* what *Chriſt* was pleaſed as yet to *conceal*, tells us with more of *Confidence* then *Truth*: *Dicimus ex hoc loco conſtare Chriſtum non omnia dixiſſe quæ ad ſalutem noſtram putabat pertinere; idémque feciſſe Spiritum Sanctum credendum*, &c. From the warrant of this Text we do affirm, that *Chriſt* told not his Diſciples whatever he thought pertinent to our Salvation; and that the Holy Ghoſt did not afterwards doe it neither, we have cauſe

Aug. in locum.

to believe. Nay, to make way for *Eccleſiaſtical Traditions*, and the *Pope's Authority* to create new *Articles* of Faith, he makes bold to adde thus much; *Idem ab Apoſtolis factum : ut non omnia ſcripta, multa etiam nè vivâ voce traderent*, The ſame thing was done by the *Apoſtles* too : inſomuch that they did not deliver *all* matters of Salvation in their *Writings*, no nor *many* ſo much as by *word* of *mouth*.

'Tis ſtrange to think into what *Abſurdities* and Contradictions the *Romaniſts* do run themſelves, that they may juſtify thoſe *Doctrines* and *Practices* which they are loath to part with. For this Jeſuite *Maldonate* declares his opinion, that there are ſome *matters* of *Salvation* that were neither *taught* by *Chriſt*, nor by his *Spirit*, nor by his *Apoſtles*, either by *Writing* or *Tradition :* and yet Cardinal *Bellarmine* doth poſitively affirm, that the *Church* of *Rome* holds *no Doctrines*, maintains *no Traditions*, ſave onely ſuch as they can clearly prove to be from *Chriſt* or his *Apoſtles*.

But as to thoſe forenamed Diſcourſes, wherein our Bleſſed *Saviour* did privately inſtruct his *Apoſtles*, and whereupon the *Roman Church* doth mightily ground their Doctrine of *Tradition :* though it cannot be *certainly* diſcovered what was the very *Subject* and particular *Arguments* of our Saviour's frequent Talk with his Diſciples at his ſeveral *Apparitions* to them after his Reſurrection; yet perhaps ſome *probable* gueſſes may be given; and accordingly ſeveral *Conjectures* are offered us by Interpreters. So *Origen*, Τίνα ἦν τὰ πολλὰ ἃ εἶχε λέγειν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τοῖς μαθηταῖς ἑαυτοῦ; &c. *What were thoſe many things which Chriſt had to ſay to his Apoſtles,*

Origen. adv. Celſum l. 2.

Apoſtles, which they could not bear? He anſwers thus, Μήποθ' ὡς Ἰουδαίοις καὶ συντραφεῖσι πρὸς κατὰ τὸ γράμμα Μωσέως νόμῳ, &c. It was the deſign of our Bleſſed Saviour to teach his Diſciples the utter *abolition* of the *Ceremoniall* Law, and the *Moſaicall* Ordinances. So St. *Chryſoſtom* gueſſeth too, Εἴτε περὶ τῆς τοῦ νόμου λύσεως, &c. Whether our Saviour ſpeaks of the *Abrogation* of the *Law*, &c. And to this *Chriſt* might well refer, when he ſaid, *I have yet many things to ſay, but ye cannot bear them now*; conſidering how hard it was for them, who were *Jews*, and the profeſſed *diſciples* of *Moſes*, to embrace a *new Religion*, and quit the *Principles* of that wherein they had been *born* and *bred*. Nor indeed had this Diſcourſe as yet been *ſeaſonable*; becauſe the Ceremoniall Law was not *abrogated* till the *Sacrifice*, Death and Paſſion of *Chriſt*, which then was not *actually* accompliſhed.

But beſides this Gueſſe of *Origen*'s and *Chryſoſtom*'s, St. *Auſtine* gives us ſome ground for another, when he tells us, *Mori pro Chriſto nondum idonei erant Apoſtoli*, The Apoſtles were not as *yet* fit and ſtrong enough to *die* for *Chriſt*. Which expreſſion giveth us a fair Intimation of St. *Auſtine*'s Judgment concerning our Saviour's words, *I have many things yet to ſay*: but about what? probably about their *Sufferings* and *Martyrdom*: but, ſaith *Chriſt*, *ye cannot bear them now?* But why not *now?* Surely it was now a time of *trouble* and ſorrow with them; their hearts were almoſt broken *already* with the conſideration of their dear *Maſter*'s approaching *Death* and Paſſion: and therefore, ſaith St. *Auſtine*, *Nunquid debuit illis ovibus dici in illo Tentationis articulo, quòd certare* Aug. in locum.

uſque ad mortem pro veritate oportebat, & pro Chriſti nomine vel Doctrina ſanguinem fundere? Was it ſeaſonable for Chriſt to tell his Apoſtles, in this juncture of time and hour of Temptation, ſince as yet they were but as ſheep infirm and weak, that they muſt expect to ſhed their bloud and ſuffer death for the Truths, Doctrines and Name of Chriſt? No; our Saviour was pleaſed to reſerve *theſe* Leſſons, that as *yet* might have ſeemed too *harſh*, as *Origen* words it, εἰς ἐπιτηδειότερον καιρὸν, τὸν μετὰ τὸ πάθος καὶ ἀνάστασιν αὐτοῦ, for a fitter *Opportunity*, namely, the time after his own Paſſion and Reſurrection.

That theſe Opinions of *Origen*, *Chryſoſtom* and *Auſtine*, concerning the *matter* of our Saviour's perſonall Diſcourſes with his Apoſtles betwixt his Reſurrection and Aſcenſion, which the *Romaniſts* urge for their *Traditions*, are but *conjecturall*, we do acknowledge: but withall, we do avouch that they are ten times *more probable* then that of *Lorinus*. For, that the *many things* which the Apoſtles *could not yet bear*, and therefore *Chriſt* did not deliver till after his Reſurrection, ſhould be ſuch as concerned the *Abolition* of the *Moſaicall Law*, or the *Diſciples* own *Sufferings*, rather then the *Authority* of the *Romane Biſhop*, the *Invocation* of *Saints*, and other *ſuperſtitious* Doctrines and Practices now taught and uſed in the *Roman Church*, as delivered by *Chriſt* in his forenamed private Diſcourſes with his Apoſtles, is much more conſonant to *Chriſtian Religion*, humane *Reaſon*, and the *Authority* of the written *Word*.

And if ſo, if we may take the Judgment of *Origen*, *Chryſoſtom* and *Auſtine*, whoſe Opinions in this matter are countenanced by Holy Writ, rather

rather then the Judgment of *Lorinus*, whoſe Opinion in this caſe the Scriptures themſelves oppoſe; though there be in this buſineſs no *Certainty* on either ſide, yet if we have *fairer Probabilities* on our part then the *Romaniſts* have on theirs; if it be more likely, that the *many things* which *Chriſt* had to ſay before his Paſſion, but did not for prudentiall conſiderations *actually* declare till after his Reſurrection, might concern, as the forenamed Fathers probably thought, the *Abrogation* of the *Jewiſh* Religion, the *Calling* of the *Gentiles*, and the *Martyrdom* of his *Apoſtles*, rather then thoſe *unwarrantable Traditions* for which the *Romaniſts* do now contend; how then comes *Bellarmine* to aſſert that they are not written?

But, upon the whole matter, the Truth is this: Since 'tis altogether impoſſible to find out what thoſe *many things* were which *Chriſt* had to teach his Diſciples before his Death, but did not doe it, becauſe *as yet they could not bear them*, till after his Reſurrection; 'tis equally impoſſible to prove that they *are* or *are not* regiſtred. But if the *Romaniſts* are of another mind, and will undertake by *infallible Teſtimonies* to demonſtrate to us what were the particular *matters* of our Saviour's ſeverall Diſcourſes at the time of his ſeverall Apparitions to his Apoſtles before his Aſcenſion, then will we alſo undertake to demonſtrate with equall evidence, *when* and by *what Apoſtles* whatever he ſo delivered ſtands recorded. And till the *Roman Church* ſhall make this our, certain we are, that thoſe words of our Bleſſed Saviour, *I have yet many things to ſay*, aſſiſted with thoſe of St. *Luke*, *he ſpake of the kingdom of God*, prove

not the thing for which our Adverſaries urge them, namely, That there were ſeverall *neceſſary Doctrines* delivered by *Chriſt* to his Apoſtles after his Reſurrection that are nowhere found in the *written* Word of God.

2. But ſince theſe forenamed Texts will not doe their deſired work, the Champions of the *Trent* Faith, who are reſolved to endeavour the Juſtification of every Article maintained and concluded on by that illegal Conventicle of a few ſuborned, packed and titular Biſhops, are obliged to try ſome other, if poſſibly they can find the leaſt Countenance for their Traditions in Sacred Writ.

There is another expreſſion of the Evangeliſt St. *John* that is often urged as a Text that will
Joh. 20. 30. doe their buſineſſe indeed; and thus it runs, *Many other ſigns truly did Jeſus in the preſence of his Diſciples, which are not written in this Book.* No; 'tis obſerved of St. *John* by one of the Greek Fathers, that he wrote λόγους πολλὸς, θαύματα παῦρα, many of *Chriſt*'s Sermons, but few of his Miracles. For 'tis certain that his Goſpel, at the requeſt of the Biſhops of *Aſia*, and in oppoſition to the *Gnoſticks* and other Hereticks, was written laſt; upon which ſcore he did adviſedly paſſe by thoſe Miracles which were already recorded by the other Evangeliſts; and ſo might well tell the world thus, *Many other ſigns truly did Jeſus, which are not written in this Book.* And withall, 'tis obſervable, that the Evangeliſt doth not mention ἄλλα Δόγματα, other *Doctrines*, but ἄλλα Σημεῖα, other *Miracles*, which are not written in his Goſpel. But what then? what Evidence gives this

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to thoſe Traditions about matters of *Faith* and *Manners*, which the *Roman* Church pretends to be as neceſſary to Salvation as thoſe great Doctrines of *Chriſt* and his Apoſtles which are clearly found in the written Word?

I remember that St. *Chryſoſtom* and ſome other Interpreters do reſtrain this expreſſion of the Evangeliſt to thoſe Miracles onely which *Chriſt* wrought after his Reſurrection, *Many other ſigns truly did Jeſus.* Here *Theophylact* puts the Queſtion thus, Περὶ ποίων Σημείων λέγει ἐνταῦθα ὁ Εὐαγγελιστής; What Miracles were thoſe which the Evangeliſt here ſpeaks of? were they ſuch as our Saviour wrought publickly and before his Paſſion? He anſwers thus, Οὐχί, ἀλλὰ μετὰ τὴν ἀνάστασιν. So Saint *Chryſoſtom* conjectures too, Ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ τὰ μὴ τὴν ἀνάστασιν λέγειν Σημεῖα, It ſeems to me that the Evangeliſt means thoſe Miracles which were done by our Saviour after his Reſurrection; and that, τῶν μαθητῶν ἕνεκεν μόνον, onely for the ſake of his Diſciples. And methinks this Conjecture of St. *Chryſoſtom*, *Theophylact*, and others, hath a very fair foundation in the Text it ſelf, which tells us, *Many other ſigns did Jeſus, which are not written in this Book*, ἐνώπιον τῶν μαθητῶν, in the *preſence*, not, of the *multitude*, but, of the *Diſciples*, and probably the Diſciples onely; and that with a deſign to confirm his Apoſtles, who had been too incredulous, in the faith of his Reſurrection. And certainly, if theſe Miracles of *Chriſt* were wrought in private before his Diſciples, and for their ſakes onely, to be, as *Theophylact* ſtyles them, σημεῖα τῆς ἀναστάσεως, Evidences and Proofs of his Reſurrection, to remove their perſonall doubts,

to

to ſatisfie their Curioſity, and to eſtabliſh their Faith; 'tis not eaſy to imagine, that the omiſſion of ſome of theſe Miracles by all the Evangeliſts ſhould any way countenance the *Traditions* of the *Roman* Church, nor prejudice the *Faith* of the *Univerſall*, which hath otherwiſe ſuch abundant Teſtimonies of *Chriſt*'s Reſurrection from the written Word, that it cannot need the Aſſiſtence and Supplement of Traditions for its Confirmation in that, or indeed in any other, Article of its Belief.

And as for thoſe mighty Works of wonder which were publickly wrought by our Bleſſed Saviour, to prove his Commiſſion from God, and to confirm the Divinity of that new Religion which he was then to introduce into the world, that they were not all written, we do eaſily grant. There might be ſeveral Miracles done by *Chriſt* which St. *John* and the other Evangeliſts thought fit to paſſe by, *ut minimè neceſſaria*, ſaith *Grotius*, as things no way neceſſary to be recorded. For although our Bleſſed Saviour, being deſirous to doe good where-ever he came, and being willing to convince the whole *Jewiſh* Nation that he was indeed the *true Meſſias*, had frequent occaſions to work various Miracles, becauſe he went to ſeverall places, and converſed amongſt ſeverall companies, where he met with divers objects of Mercy, and various perſons that were to be brought over to his new Religion: yet we do affirm, that any *one* Miracle of his, being rightly conſidered and duly weighed, had been enough to have ſatisfied all its Spectatours, that the *Perſon* and *Doctrine* of *Chriſt* were both approved and ſent by God.

God. And this bleſſed effect ſome one *ſingle* Miracle did ſometimes produce. When *Chriſt* had raiſed *Lazarus* from the dead, we are immediately told upon that, *Many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had ſeen the things which Jeſus did, believed on him.* Joh. 11. 45.

And if ſo, if *one* Miracle were ſufficient to ſecure that End for which *all* Miracles were wrought, 'tis ſure that we have enough recorded. What though the Apoſtles did not regiſter all the Miracles of *Chriſt* καθ' ἕν, one by one, and with all thoſe *Circumſtances* that did attend them? St. *John* ſaith, they could not doe it: *If they ſhould be written every one, I ſuppoſe that even the world it ſelf could not contain the books that ſhould be written.* Joh. 21. 25. But what then? are we obliged to run to unwritten *Traditions?* are we bound to believe the Truth of all thoſe Miracles which, as ſome ſay, *Chriſt* wrought in *Egypt*, when he was but a *Child*, as much as thoſe which he wrought in *Iſrael*, when he was a *Man*, and thereby ſhewed himſelf to be the *Son* of *God* too? Are we no more bound to believe the miraculous Stories of the Four *Evangeliſts* then that related by *Sozomen*, who tells us, that when *Chriſt*, in his Infancy, was entring into *Hermopolis*, there ſtood near the way an exceeding high *tree*, which, as our Saviour paſſed by, did ἐπὶ τὸ ἔδαφος κλῖναι καὶ προσκυνῆσαι, bow down his branches to the very ground, and thereby owned and made obeiſance to its Lord? Of this Miracle *Maldonate* ſaith, *Meritò Traditio videri poteſt*, 'Tis a Story that well deſerves the name of a *Tradition:* and *Sozomen* ſaith, Αἰγύπτιοι καὶ Παλαιστινοὶ μάρτυρες, This Story, and ſome other *Sozom.* Hiſt. Eccl. l. 5. c. 21. *Maldon.* in Matt. 2. 14.

miraculous ones too about the ſame Tree, are teſtified by the Inhabitants of *Egypt* and *Paleſtine*. But are we therefore obliged to believe them with the ſame credit which we give to the *Goſpel*? No; though *all Chriſt*'s Miracles are not written, yet there are *enough* recorded to confirm our Faith: ſo St. *John* aſſures us, *Theſe are written, that ye might believe that Jeſus is the Chriſt, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name*. And methinks, ſince the Evangeliſts have written, as St. *Chryſoſtom* doth expreſs and affirm, ὅσα ἱκανὰ, ſo many of *Chriſt*'s Miracles as are a *ſufficient* ground of Faith, ſuch a Faith as will undoubtedly ſave us; we need not run to *Traditions* for more. But however, though the Evangeliſts have omitted ſuch and ſuch of our Saviour's *Miracles*, yet that is no proof that they have alſo omitted ſuch and ſuch material *Doctrines* of his, that are neceſſary to Faith, Manners, and Salvation, which muſt therefore be ſupplied, as the *Roman Church* pretends, by ſuch and ſuch unwritten *Traditions*. But yet,

3. There are ſome other Scriptures urged by our Adverſaries, which, they hope, and make poor ignorant ſouls believe, will infallibly doe their work; ſuch Texts, wherein *Traditions* are not onely *mentioned*, but in expreſs terms *recommended* and *enjoyned* too.

2 Theſſ. 2. 15. That of St. *Paul* is one, *Stand faſt, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epiſtle*. The obſervation of *Traditions* is that which St. *Paul* doth here *require*, and

1 Cor. 11. 2. elſewhere *commend* too, *I praiſe you, brethren, that ye keep* παραδόσεις *the traditions as I delivered them*.

them to you. Hoc loco ſe armant Papiſtæ ad tuendas ſuas Traditiones, ſaith *Calvin*, The Papiſts arm themſelves with this Text to defend their Traditions. So doth *Cornelius à Lapide*, who ſaith, but without a warrant, *Hinc manifeſtè ſequitur, non omnia quæ fidem & mores ſpectant eſſe ſcripta, ſed multa vivâ voce tradidiſſe Paulum & Apoſtolos*, 'Tis evident from hence, that all things which concern *Faith* and *Manners* were not written, but that St. *Paul* and other Apoſtles did deliver many things by *word* of *mouth*. And thus *Eſtius* obſerves out of *Theophylact*, whoſe words are theſe, Ἐντεῦθεν δῆλον, ὅτι καὶ ἀγράφως πολλὰ παρέδωκε καὶ αὐτὸς καὶ οἱ λοιποὶ Ἀπόστολοι, 'Tis clear from this Text, that St. *Paul* and other Apoſtles *delivered* many things which they committed not to *writing*: and thence *Eſtius* doth thus infer, *Locus hic palàm facit pro Traditionibus non ſcriptis, iiſque neceſſariò tenendis*, This place is a clear Evidence for unwritten *Traditions*, and proves it neceſſary to obſerve them. In anſwer to this Text we ſhall enquire into theſe three things.

1. We ſhall enquire *what* Traditions St. *Paul* here means, what their *nature* was: whether they concerned matters of *Faith*, and any ſuch Points as are neceſſary to Salvation; or whether they reſpected ſuch things onely as concerned *Order* and *Decency*, the exteriour Diſcipline and Government of the Church. Let us view the words again, and conſider what St. *Chryſoſtom* thinks concerning them. *I praiſe you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the traditions*, &c. Here St. *Chryſoſtom* puts this Queſtion, ποῖα πάντα; What all things doth the Apoſtle mean? He anſwers,

swers, ὑπὲρ τοῦ μὴ κομᾶν, μηδὲ κατακαλύπτεσθαι, τέως ὁ λόγος ἦν αὐτῷ μόνον · St. *Paul*'s discourse had been about not *wearing* of long *hair*, and not being *covered* in the Church; and for their observation of his *Traditions* in *these* matters onely doth he now commend them. So thinks St. *Chrysostom*: and learned *Grotius* is of the same mind too, who tells us, *Hîc significat Præcepta quædam pertinentia ad* εὐταξίαν & τὸ πρέπον, St. *Paul* by his *Traditions* doth here mean nothing else but certain *Rules* which he had formerly delivered to the *Corinthians* concerning *Decency* and *Order*.

And if *these* be the *Traditions* in the Text, pray, who gainsayeth them? Not the *Church* of *England*; no, nor the *Calvinists* neither: for doth not *Calvin* himself thus acknowledg? *Ego autem non nego quin aliquæ fuerint Apostolorum Traditiones non scriptæ; sed non concedo fuisse Doctrinæ partes, nec de rebus ad Salutem necessariis. Quid igitur? quæ pertinerent ad Ordinem & Politiam.* I deny not but that there were some *Apostolical Traditions* unwritten; but I do not grant them to be matters of *Doctrine* and necessary to Salvation. But what were they then? why, such as concerned *Order* and *Government*. And the truth is, that these Traditions mentioned by St. *Paul* in the forenamed Texts were any other, the *Romanists* can never prove, and consequently gain no Advantage from them.

Calvin. in 1 Cor. 11. 2.

2. We shall enquire whether these *Traditions*, mentioned by St. *Paul* as delivered by *word* of *mouth*, might not afterwards be *written*.

'Tis sure that the Traditions in the Text, if, as St. *Chrysostom* and *Grotius* have conjectured, they were

were onely ſuch as concerned *Order* and Decency, and particularly about wearing of Hair, and uncovering the Head in holy Aſſemblies, they are recorded; and that in the ſelf-ſame Chapter too. And 'tis very poſſible, that whatſoever in any other place St. *Paul* ſtyles a *Tradition*, might afterwards be written notwithſtanding.

I remember, *Grotius* tells us, Παράδοσις *eſt id quod docetur:* Whatſoever is *taught*, whether by *word* or *writing*, is called a *Tradition*. 'Tis uſed in both ſenſes by the ancient Fathers, yea and by the Apoſtles too. Thus St. *Cyprian*, *Unde eſt iſta Traditio? utrúmne de Dominica & Evangelica Authoritate deſcendens, an de Apoſtolorum Mandatis atque Epiſtolis veniens?* Whence is that *Tradition?* comes it from the Authority of our Lord and his *Goſpel*, or from the Commands and *Epiſtles* of his Apoſtles? 'Tis evident by this expreſſion, that St. *Cyprian* acknowledgeth, that though this or that be *written*, yet it may be ſtyled a *Tradition* notwithſtanding. So he farther explains himſelf a little after, *Si ergò aut in Evangelio præcipitur, aut in Apoſtolorum Epiſtolis aut Actibus continetur, obſervetur etiam & hæc ſancta Traditio;* Let this holy *Tradition* alſo be obſerved, if it be commanded in the *Goſpel*, or contained in the *Epiſtles* or *Acts* of the Apoſtles.

Cyprianus ad Pompeium Ep. 74.

And that the ſelf-ſame Truths which St. *Paul* and other Apoſtles *preached* to the world were afterwards *written*, either by *themſelves* or *ſome body* elſe, is evident from that expreſſion of *Irenæus*, *Matthæus in Hebræis ipſorum linguâ ſcripturam edidit Evangelii, cùm Petrus & Paulus Romæ evangelizarent & fundarent Eccleſiam. Poſt verò*

Adv. Hæreſes l. 3. c. 1.

horum diſceſſum, Marcus, diſcipulus & Interpres Petri, & Ipſe quæ à Petro annunciata erant per ſcripta nobis tradidit; & Lucas autem, ſectator Pauli, quod ab illo prædicabatur Evangelium in libro condidit. The ſame thing is thus atteſted by *Euſebius*, Ὁ μὲν Ματθαῖος ἐν τοῖς Ἑβραίοις τῇ ἰδίᾳ διαλέκτῳ αὐτῶν τὴν γραφὴν ἐξήνεγκαν Εὐαγγελίου, τῷ Πέτρῳ καὶ τῷ Παύλῳ ἐν Ῥώμῃ εὐαγγελιζομένων καὶ θεμελιούντων τὴν ἐκκλησίαν. Μετὰ δὲ τὴν τούτων ἔξοδον, Μάρκος, ὁ μαθητὴς καὶ ἑρμηνευτὴς Πέτρου, καὶ αὐτὸς τὰ ὑπὸ Πέτρου κηρυσσόμενα ἐγγράφως ἡμῖν παραδέδωκε· καὶ Λουκᾶς δὲ, ὁ ἀκόλουθος Παύλου, τὸ ὑπ' ἐκείνου κηρυσσόμενον Εὐαγγέλιον ἐν βιβλίῳ κατέθετο, &c. St. *Matthew* wrote his Goſpel amongſt the *Jews* in their own language, whilſt St. *Peter* and St. *Paul* preached and founded a Church at *Rome*. And after their departure, St. *Mark*, who was the Diſciple and Interpreter of St. *Peter*, delivered in writing the things which St. *Peter* had preached: St. *Luke* alſo, who was the follower of St. *Paul*, compiled in a Book that Goſpel which St. *Paul* had publiſhed. So *Irenæus* ſaith again, *Evangelium, quod quidem tunc præconiaverunt, poſtea per voluntatem Dei in Scripturis nobis tradiderunt*, That Goſpel which the Apoſtles had then *preached*, they did afterwards deliver to us in the *Scriptures*, and that by the will, pleaſure, and command of God.

Euſeb. Hiſt. l. 5. c. 8.

Iren. adv. Hær. l. 3. c. 1.

And doubtleſs St. *Paul* intimates as much in that expreſſion of his, *Hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word or our epiſtle.* What he had formerly *taught* them by *word* of mouth, and what he had already *delivered* in his former *Epiſtle*, is here equally called a *Tradition*. For, the truth is, the Subſtance of St. *Paul*'s *Sermons* and *Epiſtles*, the Subject matter of his

2 Theſ. 2. 15.

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Preaching and his *Writing*, was all one. This ſeems clear from that expreſſion of his, *To write the ſame things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is ſafe.* What *ſame* things doth he mean? St. *Hierom* tells us, *Eadem repetere quæ præſens dixeram*, To *repeat* the ſame things with my *Pen*, which I *delivered* with my *Tongue* when I was preſent with you. And thus did other *Apoſtles* and *Evangeliſts* too; what they *ſpake* at one time, that they *wrote* at another. Thus dealt St. *Luke* with his dear friend *Theophilus*, whom he firſt inſtructed by *word* of *mouth*, but afterwards by *writing*. So *Theophylact* tells us, Πρότερον μὲν ἀγράφως σε κατήχησα, ὦ Θεόφιλε, νῦν δὲ ἐγγράφως σοι παραδιδοὺς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, I formerly catechized thee *without* writing, but now by giving thee a *written* Goſpel. But what doth this written Goſpel contain? new leſſons or old ones? did St. *Luke ſpeak* one thing, and *write* another? No; the reaſon why he wrote, *Theophylact* gives us thus, Ἀσφαλίζομαι τὸν νοῦν σου λογισμὸν, ἵνα μὴ ἐπιλάθηται τῶν ἀγράφως παραδιδομένων, I do by writing *ſtrengthen* and ſecure thy mind, leſt it ſhould *forget* what things had been *formerly* delivered by word of mouth. So he tells us again, Διὰ τοῦτό σοι ἔγραψα εὐαγγέλιον, ἵνα ἃ ἀγράφως κατηχήθης ἐν ἀσφαλείᾳ πλείονι κατέχῃς, I have therefore written thee a Goſpel, that thou mayeſt the more firmly *remember* and keep the things which thou haſt been taught by *word* of *mouth*.

Phil. 3. 1.

Theophil. in præfat. Lucæ.

And that St. *Paul* dealt thus with the Churches to whom he *preached* and *wrote*, we have ground enough to believe; 'tis more then probable, that the *ſelf-ſame Traditions*, in all neceſſary points of Faith, which he *taught* them by *word* of mouth at one

one time, he alſo *penned* at another. Methinks we may very rationally collect this from what St. *Chryſoſtom* ſaith concerning that ſpeech of St.
1 Cor. 11. 2. *Paul, ye keep the traditions as I delivered them to you* : Hence that Father thus infers, Ἀρα καὶ ἀγράφως πολλὰ παρεδίδου τότε, Therefore at *that* time St. *Paul* delivered them many things without writing. We grant it; but withall we muſt obſerve St. *Chryſoſtom*'s τότε, *then*, at *that* time; an expreſſion, doubtleſs, that hath little of ſavour in it, if he doth not mean, that what St. *Paul* did thus deliver by *or all Tradition* at *one* time, he alſo *wrote* at *another*. And although the Epiſtles of St. *Paul* being written to *particular Churches* or *Perſons*, upon *particular matters*, in anſwer to ſuch and ſuch *particular Queſtions*, and againſt ſuch and ſuch *particular Opinions* and Hereſies, he had not a fair occaſion in *every*, or, perhaps, in *any one* ſingle Epiſtle, to give an account of every thing relating to *Chriſt* and his *Religion* : yet we do affirm, that if we take all his Epiſtles *collectively* and together, we ſhall find, that the whole Summe of that Goſpel which St. *Paul preached* to the world by word of mouth is ſo fully *delivered* in them, that whoſoever ſhall *believe* the *Truths* and *perform* the *Duties* contained in them, though he know no Scripture beſides, ſhall certainly be ſaved. Nor indeed was it neceſſary that St. *Paul* ſhould undertake to ſet down the *whole* Doctrine of *Chriſt* in *every* or *any one* of his ſhort Epiſtles, ſince it was ſometimes his *command*, and might always be his juſt *expectation*, that that Epiſtle which he *wrote* to *one* Church ſhould be *communicated* to *others* alſo, for their farther Information too. And certainly, if

all

all the neceſſary Points and ſubſtantial Parts of that Religion which St. *Paul preached* to the world by word of mouth were afterwards *recorded* either by himſelf in his own Epiſtles, or, as *Euſebius* and *Irenæus* teſtifie, by St. *Luke* in his Goſpel; the *Roman* Church will never be able to juſtifie their unwritten Traditions, thoſe at leaſt which they urge as *neceſſary*, from any one Inſtance or Expreſſion of St. *Paul*. But,

3. We ſhall enquire whether the *Traditions* now contended for in the *Roman* Church be the *ſame*, or of a *like* nature, with thoſe the obſervation whereof St. *Paul requires* from the *Theſſalonians*, and *commends* in the Church of *Corinth*.

This Conſideration is of great concern: for, if the Traditions of the *Roman* Church be of *another* kind; if they ſhall prove to be the late and new *Inventions* of men, not ſo much as thought of in the Apoſtles days; the whole caſe is ſo altered, that I do not ſee how it is poſſible for them to find the leaſt Countenance from St. *Paul*. For all that St. *Paul* doth either *require* or *commend* in this matter is, the obſervation of thoſe Traditions onely which he *himſelf*, who was guided by God's infallible Spirit, had delivered to ſuch and ſuch Churches: they are his own words, *Ye keep the traditions as I delivered them*; and again, *Hold the traditions which ye have been taught by word, or our epiſtle*. Here St. *Hierom* notes, *Quando ſua vult teneri, non vult extranea ſuperaddi*; Whereas St. *Paul* commands them to obſerve *his* Traditions, he doth in effect forbid them to introduce ſtrange ones of their *own*. Now whatever Traditions the Church of *Rome* pretends to have been

delivered by St. *Paul* to the Churches of *Chriſt* without being written, are of theſe two kinds.

1. 'Tis pretended that St. *Paul*, and other Apoſtles too, delivered ſome unwritten *Traditions* that concerned *neceſſary Points* of *Faith*, Worſhip, Manners, and Rules of Righteouſneſs.

1 Cor. 15. 3. Thus he tells the *Corinthians*, *I delivered unto you that which I alſo received, how that Chriſt died for our ſins according to the Scriptures*, &c. and 1 Cor. 11. 23. again, *I received of the Lord, that which alſo I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jeſus, the ſame night in which he was betrayed, took bread*, &c. 'Tis evident from theſe Texts, that theſe Traditions which St. *Paul* delivered to the Church concerning matters of *Faith* and *Worſhip* he received from *God*, and found them ſuitable to the *written* Word.

Now let us conſider whether the *preſent* Traditions of the *Roman* Church about matters of *Faith* and Divine Service be ſuch too: if they *Cornel. à Lap.* in 1 Cor. c. 16. v. 2. are, we oppoſe them not. They tell us, that the Obſervation of the *Lord's day* is an *Apoſtolicall* Tradition: we contradict it not, becauſe we find ground for it in the *written* Word; we alſo find it mentioned by the Primitive and *early Fathers*. *Ignat.* Epiſt. ad Tralli-anos. *Ignatius* (if yet that Epiſtle of his be not corrupted) tells us, Πεφύκεν ἡ Παρασκευὴ τὸ Πάθος, τὸ Σάββατον τὴν Ταφὴν, ἡ Κυριακὴ τὴν Ἀνάστασιν. The Jewiſh *Preparation* was the day of *Chriſt*'s Paſſion, their *Sabbath* of his Buriall, and our *Lord's day* of his Reſurrection. 'Tis mentioned by *Tertullian*, who ſaith, *Tertul.* de Corona. *Die Dominico jejunium nefas ducimus*, To faſt on the *Lord's day* we count it ſin. 'Tis mentioned *Greg. Naz.* Orat. 43. by *Nazianzene*, who ſtyles it ἐγκαίνιον, καινὴ κλῖσις, μυθος-

μεθέορτος ἑορτὴ, &c. 'Tis from the great *Probabilities* given us in the *written* Word, and the pregnant *Testimonies* of *Antiquity*, that the *Reformed* Church doth observe this Tradition which concerns the *Lord's day* with greater strictness then the *Roman*.

They tell us again, that the *Baptism* of *Infants* is an *Apostolicall Tradition* : we are so far from contradicting them, that we do not onely *practise* it our selves, but *maintain* it against all Opposers, because 'tis mightily countenanced in *Sacred Writ*, and commended to us by *all Antiquity*. I remember, *Dionysius* the *Areopagite* (if he that goeth under that name be indeed the man) tells us, Παῖδας ὄπω τὰ θεῖα συνιέναι δυναμένους τῆς ἱερᾶς μετόχους γίγνεσθαι Θεογενεσίας, that Children who were yet uncapable to understand the Mysteries of the Gospel were made partakers of Divine Regeneration; and saith, that the Church observed this Practice; πρὸς τῆς ἀρχαίας μυηθέντες παραδόσεως, being taught so to doe by *ancient* Tradition. Accordingly *Nazianzene* thus adviseth, Νήπιόν ἐστί σοι; ἐκ βρέφους ἁγιασθήτω, &c. Hast thou an *Infant*? let him be sanctified from his Infancy. And so St. *Cyprian* and other Bishops give their Judgments, *Prohiberi non debet Infans qui recèns natus*, &c. The Infant that is but newly born must not be debarred from Baptism. Whoever denied this was condemned by the Church; and accordingly the *Council* of *Carthage*, which consisted of two hundred and seventeen Fathers, passed this Sentence upon him, Ὁστισδήποτε τὰ μικρὰ καὶ νεογέννητα ἐκ τῶν γαστέρων τῶν μητέρων βαπτίζεσθαι ἀρνεῖται, Ἀνάθεμα εἴη· Whosoever denieth that little *Children* newly dropped from their

Dion. Areop. de Eccl. Hierarch. p. 151, &c.

Greg. Nazianz. Orat. 40.

Cyprianus in Epist. ad Fidum, de Infantibus bapt.

Concil. Carthag. Can. 112.

Mothers Womb ought to be *baptized*, let him be *Accurſed*. Theſe and the like Authorities do induce us to believe that the *Baptiſm* of *Infants*, though no-where in plain terms commanded in Scripture, is yet a *Divine Tradition*; and upon that well-grounded Confidence our Church doth as *conſtantly practiſe* and as *ſtrongly defend* it as ever *theirs* did or can do.

They tell us again, that the Inſtitution of our *Chriſtian Feſtivals*, and the obſervation of *Lent*, are *Apoſtolicall* Traditions. Well; though they will find it a difficult task to prove them ſuch; though the firſt Inſtitution of *Lent* is by ſome aſcribed to *Teleſphorus*; and though about the obſervation thereof there was, and that very early too, ἀμφισβήτησις καὶ ποικιλία, doubts and various opinions, as *Irenæus* and *Euſebius* tell us: yet, becauſe our Chriſtian *Faſts* and *Feſtivals* are very ſuitable to *Scripture*-Rules, and were obſerved as great helps to and expreſſions of their *Devotion* and *Piety* by our religious Anceſtours, and indeed the Univerſality of the Chriſtian Church, we do readily embrace and practiſe both.

Irenæus in Epiſt. ad Victorem. *Euſeb.* Hiſt. Eccl. l. 5. c. 24.

But when our Adverſaries preſs upon us, under the notion of *Apoſtolicall Traditions*, many things of *Faith* and *Worſhip* defined in their late Conventicle of *Trent*, though altogether unknown to the *firſt* and *pureſt* Ages of the Chriſtian Church, and contrary to the *written Word*; we find reaſon to lie under the *Anathema's* and Excommunication of the *Roman* Church, rather then to comply with it in thoſe *Doctrines* and *Practices* of theirs which are ſo exceeding far from being *Apoſtolical*.

They tell us, indeed, that their *Veneration* of

Saints

Saints is practiſed *juxta Catholicæ & Apoſtolicæ Eccleſiæ uſum, à primævis Chriſtianæ Religionis temporibus receptum*, according to the uſe of the *Catholick* and *Apoſtolick* Church, and was received from the *beginning* of the Chriſtian Faith: whereas the *Invocation* of *Saints*, now practiſed in the *Roman* Church, is not mentioned by any of the Fathers till above *two hundred* years after *Chriſt*; and conſequently cannot be imagined to be an Apoſtolical Tradition. Concil. Trident. die primâ Seſſ. ult. Can. de Sanct. invoc. *Chemnit.* Exam. Concil. Trid. p. 627.

And as for the *Roman* Cuſtom of *Praying* for the *dead*, by the Practice whereof in former Ages they would fain eſtabliſh their Doctrine of *Purgatory*, and that eſpecially to keep up the credit of their dear *Indulgences*: though we find this exceſs of groundleſs and *uſeleſſe Charity* uſed in the Chriſtian Church, and that ſomewhat early too; though St. *Cyprian*, in the third Century, mentions *Oblatio pro Dormitione, & Deprecatio nomine defunctorum*; though *Tertullian*, in the ſame Century, mentions *Oblationes pro defunctis*; nay more, though *Dionyſius* the *Areopagite* (who, if he be the man, lived in the firſt Century) tells us, ὁ θεῖος ἱεραρχης εὐχὴν ἱερὰν ἐπὶ τῷ κοιμωμένῳ ποιεῖται, The holy Prieſt makes an holy Prayer *for*, or *over*, the dead: yet none of all theſe do aſſert this Practice to have had its Originall from any *Divine* or *Apoſtolicall* Tradition, as the *Roman* Church contends. *Tertullian*, indeed, concerning this and ſome other Practices uſed in his time confeſſeth thus, *Si legem expoſtules Scripturarum, nullam invenies*, If you require a *Scripture*-command for this and that, there is none to be found: upon which ſcore he aſcribes theſe things to *Tradition*; but *whence* that *Cyprianus* Epiſt. 66. *Tertul.* de Corona. *Dionyſ.* de Eccl. Hier. c. 7.

Tradition took its riſe, he doth not tell us. But the truth is, St. *Chryſoſtom* doth; who, in the behalf of perſons *deceaſed* in the Guilt of ſin, exhorts his hearers thus, Βοηθῶμεν αὐτοῖς καὶ δυνάμεν, Let us *aſſiſt* and *ſuccour* them to our utmoſt power. But what can ſurviving perſons doe for the relief of *departed* Sinners? he anſwers, αὐτοί τε εὐχόμενοι, καὶ ἑτέρους παρακαλοῦντες εὐχὰς ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν ποιεῖσθαι, let us both *pray* for them our ſelves, and beſeech others to doe ſo too. And that the *Dead* ſhould be particularly remembred in the *Prayers* of the Church at the celebration of the *Lord's Supper*, he ſaith, οὐκ εἰκῇ ἐνομοθετήθη παρὰ τῶν Ἀποστόλων, it was *ordained* by the *Apoſtles*, and that not in vain. And that this Practice ſpred and continued in the Church after St. *Chryſoſtom*'s time, is evident from that expreſſion of St. *Auſtine*, *Non parva eſt univerſæ Eccleſiæ Authoritas, quæ in hac conſuetudine claret, ubi in precibus Sacerdotis, quæ Domino Deo ad ejus Altare funduntur, locum ſuum habet etiam commendatio Mortuorum.* 'Tis clear indeed from theſe words, that to *remember* the dead in their moſt ſolemn *Prayers* at the celebration of the *Euchariſt*, was grown, in St. *Auſtine*'s time, the generall *Cuſtom* of the Church: but that this Cuſtom had its *Originall* from the *Apoſtles*, he doth not ſay. Nor indeed could this be the *Inſtitution* of the *Apoſtles*, that there ſhould be a particular *Commemoration* of the *dead*, and a ſolemn form of *Prayer* put up to God on their behalf, at the adminiſtration of the *Lord's Supper*, if that Obſervation be true which *Chemnitius* aſcribes to St. *Hierom*, St. *Gregory* and others, in theſe words, *Apoſtolos ad ſolam Orationem Dominicam celebrâſſe actio-*

Chryſoſt. in Epiſt. ad Philip. c. 1. Orat. 3. in Mort.

Auguſt. de Cura pro mortuis gerenda.

Chemnit. Exam. Conc. Trident. p. 535.

actionem Myſteriorum Divinorum. If this be ſo, that the Apoſtles themſelves uſed no *other* Prayer but the *Lord's* alone at their Celebration of the *Euchariſt*, how can it be imagined, that thoſe *ſolemn Supplications* which in after-times were made for the *dead* at the *Altar* ſhould be of *Apoſtolicall Inſtitution.*

But however, though the Church of *Rome* may *pretend*, but cannot *prove*, (for one St. *Chryſoſtom* is not enough) *Apoſtolicall Tradition* for ſuch and ſuch Doctrines and Practices of theirs; yet what Authority from *Chriſt* or his *Apoſtles* can they plead for thoſe Articles of their *new Creed*, which their *Pope Pius* the Fourth hath impiouſly impoſed upon the Church of *Chriſt*, and added to that received *Nicene Creed*, as if it were of equall Credit even with *that*, and to be believed upon *penalty* of *Damnation?*

When St. *Paul* delivered ſuch and ſuch *Traditions* to the Chriſtian Church, he tells us, Παρέλαβον ἀπὸ τῦ Κυρίυ, *I received of the Lord:* but could *Pope Pius* ſay as much of his? and can the preſent Church of *Rome* ſay as much of theirs, when in their *new*-found *Creed* they teach us to ſay, *I profeſs that there are truly and properly Seven Sacraments of the new Law inſtituted by Chriſt?* Do they indeed gather this Article of their Faith, as we do all thoſe in the three received *Creeds*, from clear Teſtimonies of Holy Writ? or do they collect this Doctrine and number of their Seven Sacraments, as their Patriarch of *Venice* is ſaid to have done, from that particular expreſſion of St. *Andrew*, when he told his Lord, *There is a lad here which hath five loaves and two fiſhes?* When they Joh. 6. 9.

require

require us to ſay, *I profeſs that there is a true, proper and propitiatory Sacrifice offered to God in the Maſſe for the Quick and the Dead*, do they indeed father *this* Tradition upon St. *Paul*, who ſaith, Heb. 9. 28. *Chriſt was once offered*; and again, Heb. 10. 14. *Chriſt by one offering hath perfected for ever them that are ſanctified?* Again, when they teach us to ſay, *I profeſs that in the Euchariſt the Bread and the Wine* (and why not their *Water* too?) *are tranſubſtantiated into the body and bloud of Chriſt*, do they ground this Tradition upon the words of Conſecration, *This is my Body*; when *Scotus* himſelf, who was one of their own great Champions, hath told the world, that the words of *Chriſt* do not neceſſarily import it, and that Tranſubſtantiation (for which *Bellarmine* indeed corrects him) was no Article of Faith till the *Lateran* Council? When they teach us to ſay, *I acknowledge that under one Kind whole and perfect Chriſt and the true Sacrament is received*, do they ground that Doctrine upon a *Canon* eſtabliſhed by the Council of *Conſtance*, or upon the *Example* and *Command* of our Bleſſed *Saviour*, who delivered both the Elements to all his Communicants, and gave them this expreſs injunction concerning the *Cup* in particular, *Drink ye all of this?* And that this Command of our Bleſſed Saviour was obſerved in the *Primitive* Church, where the Miniſter, according to *Chriſt*'s own Example, delivered the Conſecrated *Cup* to *all* the Communicants, is evident from the Teſtimony of the moſt early Fathers. *Ignat.* in Epiſt. ad Philadelph. "Εν ποτήριον πᾶις ὅλοις διανεμῆσαι, ſaith *Ignatius*; and, *Dion. Areop.* de Eccleſ. Hier. c. 3. τὸ ἑνιαῖον τῆ ποτηρίᾳ πᾶσι καταμερίσαι, &c. ſaith *Dionyſius*: there was then one *Cup* diſtributed to *all*. And if this were the known

Practice

Practice of the *Primitive* Church, what *ancient Tradition* can the *Roman* Church produce for their Communion in *one* Kind onely? Again, when they bid us say, *I do constantly hold that there is a Purgatory*, do they derive this Tradition from the writings of *Plato*, who mentions *three* Receptacles for departed Souls; or from those Expressions of *Prophets* or *Apostles*, which say of all departed Saints, *They rest from their labours*, and of all departed Sinners, *They shall be turned into hell?* Once more; when they would have us believe that *Saints* and *Angels* are to be worshipped, that there is a Veneration lawfully paid to the very *Reliques* of Saints, to the *Crosse* of *Christ*, to the *Images* of the Virgin *Mary*, &c. do they ground this Tradition upon the *Second* Commandment, (which they could as willingly blot out of their *Bibles* as they have done out of some of their *Catechisms*,) or upon any Expression of St. *Paul*, both which do flatly condemn the Worshipping of any Creature? No; 'tis well observed by *Calvin*, *Sub Traditionum titulo includunt omnes crassas abominationes manifesto Dei Verbo contrarias*; The *Romanists* under the name of *Traditions* do include all their grosse *Abominations* which are directly contrary to the Word of God; and so are far enough from being those traditionall Doctrines, or any whit like them, of Faith and Worship, that are recommended by St. *Paul*, who imposed not any *Belief* or *Practice* upon the Church but what was, as himself words it, κατὰ γραφὰς, according to the Scriptures. But.

Calvin. in 1 Cor. 11. 2.

2. 'Tis urged by the *Roman* Church, that St. *Paul*, and other Apostles too, delivered some un-

written *Traditions* to their immediate Succeſſours which concerned the external *Diſcipline*, Order, Policy, Rites and Ceremonies of the Church.

Well, and who denieth it? not *Calvin*, who, though he were a great oppoſer of ſuperfluous and burthenſome Ceremonies, doth yet grant thus much; *Paulus, Eccleſiæ Corinthiacæ primus fundator, Inſtitutis piis & honeſtis eam formaverat, ut decenter & ordine illic agerentur omnia:* St. *Paul*, who was the firſt Founder of the Church of *Corinth*, did ſo form it with pious and laudable Inſtitutions, that all things there might be tranſacted without the leaſt *Indecency* or *Diſorder*. So runs that *written* and well-known Rule of his, *Let* 1 Cor. 14. 40. *all things be done* εὐσχημόνως καὶ κατὰ τάξιν, *decently and in order*. But beſides this Rule that he hath left upon *Record*, he farther tells them, *The reſt will I ſet in order when I come*. And what he *did*, or *enjoyned* to be done, in purſuance of this Promiſe, perhaps might be never written.

But, as *Calvin* demands, *Quid hoc ad inſulſas Ceremoniarum nugas quæ viſuntur in Papatu? quid hoc ad Superſtitionem pluſquam Judaicam?* What's all this to the *inſipid* and *fooliſh Ceremonies* of the *Roman* Church? how doth this juſtifie thoſe Superſtitions of theirs that are more then *Jewiſh?* So numerous are their Ceremonies, that I cannot imagine what St. *Auſtine* would have ſaid, had he lived in our times, who thus complained of his own, *Religionem ſervilibus oneribus premunt, ut tolerabilior ſit conditio Judæorum*, &c. The Condition of the *Jews*, in reſpect of burthenſom Ceremonies, was more tolerable then that of *Chriſtians*.

Aug. in Epiſt. ad Januarium.

I re-

I remember, *Bellarmine* reckons up no leſs then *twenty two* Ceremonies uſed in the *Roman* Church in the Adminiſtration of *Baptiſm*; and tells us, that they are all of *Apoſtolicall* Inſtitution, or at leaſt of great *Antiquity*: ſome of which are theſe; *Exorciſms*, *Salt*, *Spittle*, *Chriſm*, the *Wax-taper*, the *white Apparrell*, and the *Kiſſe*, &c. And as to the Sacrament of the *Euchariſt*, the ſame *Bellarmine* tells us, *Apoſtoli legem condunt, ut ſumatur ante omnes alios cibos, nimirum à jejunis*; the *Apoſtles* eſtabliſhed a Law, that it ſhould be receiv'd before all other food, that is, by perſons *faſting*. And yet that Rule of St. *Paul*, which the *Romaniſts* can never ſatisfactorily anſwer, ſtands upon *record* to the contrary, *If any man hunger, let him eat at home*. Hence *Luther* tells King *Henry* the Eighth, *Apud nos non peccat qui modeſtè ederit & biberit ante Communionem*, With us the man doth not ſin who *eats* or *drinks* moderately before the Sacrament. And 'tis well known, that the *Primitive* Chriſtians, who were very tender of all *Apoſtolicall* Inſtitutions, did, at leaſt in ſome *places* and upon ſome *days*, in imitation of our Bleſſed Saviour, receive the Sacrament *after Supper*. So much may we collect from that expreſſion of St. *Auſtine*, who grants, *Inſtitutum eſſe multis locis, ut die Paſchæ poſt refectionem Deo offeratur*, &c. that it was the Cuſtom of many places, to offer (the Euchariſt) to God *after meat*. And *Sozomen* tells us, that ſome alſo *dined* before the reception of the Sacrament: Πρὸς ἑσπέραν τοῦ Σαββάτου συνιόντες, ἠριστηκότες ἤδη, μυστηρίων μετέχουσι, They coming together on the Sabbath towards the Evening, and having already *dined*, they partake

Bellarminus de Rom. Pontifice l. 4. c. 16.

1 Cor. 11. 34.

Lutherus contra Hen. Oct.

Aug. Epiſt. 118. ad Januarium.

Sozom. Hiſt. l. 7. c. 19.

of the Myſteries. From this Authority *Cornelius à Lapide* is forced to acknowledge thus much, *Perduravit hic mos in nonnullis Eccleſiis per multa ſecula*, This Cuſtom of *eating* before the Sacrament continued in ſome Churches for many Ages: and yet is *faſting* an *Apoſtolicall* Inſtitution? is it indeed *Conſuetudo neceſſariò ſervanda?* a Cuſtom that muſt of neceſſity be obſerved, as *Bellarmine* contends?

Corn. à Lap. in 1 Cor. 11. 21.

Bellarm. de Miſſa l. 2. c. 14.

But ſince *Tertullian* hath given us a fair Intimation, in that expreſſion of his, *Non ſciet maritus quid ante omnem cibum ſumas*, &c. that in his time the Sacrament was received *before* all other food; ſince *Nazianzene* hath aſſured us, that the *Euchariſt* was celebrated in his Church πρὸ δείπνου, *before Supper*; and ſince St. *Auſtine* hath told us, *Per univerſum orbem mos iſte ſervatur*, The Cuſtom of receiving the Lord's Supper *faſting* is obſerved by the *whole* Chriſtian Church throughout the World: we look upon it as a *laudable* Practice, and uſe it as an *ancient* Rite, though it will be hard to prove it an *Apoſtolicall* Inſtitution. For St. *Auſtine's Placuit Spiritui Sancto*, &c. urged by *Bellarmine*, will not evince it; no, not upon the Principles of his own Church: for 'tis well known, that the *Pope* and his *Councils* do commonly aſcribe to the Holy Ghoſt as well *their* own *Determinations*, as the *Tradition* of *Chriſt's Apoſtles*.

Tertul. l. 2. ad uxorem.

Naz. Orat. 40.

Aug. Epiſt. 118.

But although our receiving the Euchariſt *faſting* were granted to be the *Dictate* of *God's* Holy Spirit, ſignified to the Church either by the *Apoſtles* themſelves, or their immediate *Succeſſours* in that Age wherein the extraordinary Revelations of the *Holy Ghoſt* were as yet continued; though,

though, I ſay, this Ceremony of receiving the Sacrament *faſting* were certainly of *Divine* or *Apoſtolicall* Inſtitution; yet doubtleſſe ſeverall *Rites* recommended and uſed by the *Roman* Church in the Adminiſtration of this Sacrament are not ſo. For, who commands that the Sacramental Bread muſt needs be broken into *three* Pieces, as if there were ſome great *Myſteries* ſignified by a *threefold* fraction? Who requires the *Circumgeſtation* of the *Hoſt*? Who commands the Prieſt to *ſign* himſelf, the Altar, the Book, the Elements, and all the Congregation, with the *Croſſe*? Was it ſome *Apoſtle*, or their own *Alexander*, which ordained that the Sacramental *Wine* ſhould be mixed with *Water*? What warrant can be pretended from the *command* or *example* of *Chriſt*, or any *Apoſtle* of his, for putting the conſecrated Bread, not into the *Hand*, but the *Mouth*, of their Communicants? I remember that *Canon* of the Council of *Altiſſiodorum*, a Town in *France*, *Non licet mulieri nudâ manu Euchariſtiam ſumere*, 'Tis not lawful for a *woman* to receive the Sacrament with a *bare* and *naked* hand; no, if ſhe want her *Dominical*, her linen Gloves, *non communicet*, let her not partake of the Sacrament: that's *their* law. Concil. Altiſſiod. Can. 36.

I remember alſo another *Canon* eſtabliſhed by a Council aſſembled in *Conſtantinople*, which runs thus, Τὰς παλάμας εἰς σαυρὸν τυπῶ ὁ μεταλαμβάνομενος, The Communicant muſt frame his hands into the *figure* of a *Croſſe*. And how that muſt be done too, there is a *Jeſuit* who thus inſtructs us; *Dexterâ ſuperpoſitâ ſiniſtræ in modum Crucis*, &c. Certainly theſe *Canons* are ſo *ſuperſtitious*, that they ſavour of a *Pope* rather then an *Apoſtle*: but *Alex. Ariſt.* Synopſis Canonum. *Symeon May* Epitome Canonum. *Corn. à Lap.* in 1 Cor. 11. ult.

however, they give ſufficient evidence, that the *Euchariſt* of old was received by the Communicants with their *Hands*, not their *Mouths*. The truth is, the *Roman* Church hath no more warrant from any *Apoſtolicall* Tradition for theſe and ſome other Ceremonies uſed therein about the *Euchariſt*, then they have for their *half*-Communion, whereby, againſt the *Inſtitution* of *Chriſt*, the *Diſcourſe* of St. *Paul*, and the *Evidence* of *Primitive* Practice, the Laiety are unworthily robbed of half the Sacrament, and are admitted onely to a ξηροφαγία, a *dry Feaſt* indeed.

'Tis very evident, that theſe and many other *Uſages* and *Doctrines*, received in the *Roman* Church, are not the Doctrines and Practices taught and required by *Chriſt* or St. *Paul*; no, ſuch they are as have no Countenance from any clear Text of *Prophets*, *Evangeliſts*, or *Apoſtles*: and becauſe 'tis ſo, becauſe the *Scriptures* will never juſtifie thoſe Practices and Aſſertions of theirs, they are reſolved, and indeed much obliged in point of honour, to ſeek out for other Arguments to prove them: and what they are, we ſhall now conſider.

II. The Champions of the *Roman* Church do endeavour to prove their Traditions to be Apoſtolicall by the Teſtimonies of their *own Biſhops*, as if they were Infallible.

Thus, that the yearly *Renovation* of their *Chriſm* is an *Apoſtolicall* Tradition, doth *Bellarmine* offer to prove by the Authority of *Pope Fabian*, who, in his ſecond Epiſtle to the Biſhops of the *Eaſtern* Church, tells them thus, *Iſta à Sanctis Apoſtolis & eorum Succeſſoribus accepimus, Vobiſque tenenda man-*

mandamus; 'Tis that which we have received from the *Apoſtles* and their *Succeſſours*, and ſo we require from you its Obſervation. To this he adds the Teſtimony of *Innocent* the Firſt, who, in his firſt Epiſtle to *Decentius*, ſaith, *Si Inſtituta Eccleſiaſtica ut ſunt à beatis Apoſtolis tradita integra vellent ſervare Domini ſacerdotes*, &c. If our *Lord*'s Prieſts would entirely obſerve the Inſtitutions of the Church as they were delivered by the bleſſed *Apoſtles*, &c. Now to theſe and the like Teſtimonies of the *Roman* Biſhops, which are cited in the defence of ſuch and ſuch Traditions, we have two things to anſwer.

1. The *Roman Biſhops* that have pleaded for the unwritten Traditions of that Church are not *competent* Witneſſes; nor doth their Teſtimony deſerve to be admitted in matters of this Concern.

'Tis notoriouſly known, that there are ſeverall Traditions maintained by the *Roman* Church that are very *advantageous* to their *Biſhop*, and others of their *Clergy* too, and that upon ſeverall accounts. That Doctrine which teacheth the Pope's *Primacy* and Supremacy over all other *Biſhops* and Secular *Princes* makes much for his *Greatneſs*, Splendour and Magnificence: that Doctrine which aſſerts his Power to diſpenſe with *Vows*, *Oaths*, and in ſeveral caſes with *Matrimonial Contracts*, either to *allow* or *null* them; that Doctrine which aſſigns him a Power, more then ordinarily Miniſteriall, to *pardon* Sin, and deliver whom he will from *Purgatory*, &c. makes for his *Wealth*, and fills his Bags apace.

And if ſo, if theſe and other Doctrines do bring in

in ſuch a Revenue to the *Roman* Biſhop, and many more of his Church too; 'tis very likely that they will be ſo kind to themſelves, as to plead for thoſe Traditions by which alone thoſe Doctrines can be maintained. That the Biſhops of *Rome* have the uſual Infirmities of other men, and may perhaps fail now and then in matters of *Morall* Concern, I think no man denieth. 'Tis a bug word that *Baronius* ſpeaks of Pope *Vigilius*, whom he calleth a *Thief*, a *Brigand*, &c. and 'tis no great Commendation which *Bellarmine* gives of *John* the Twenty third, when he doth acknowledge him to have been a man *vitæ diſſolutæ*, of a *looſe* and *diſſolute* Converſation; ſo diſſolute, that fifty three ſeverall Articles that concerned his *Manners* (for in Points of *Faith* the Pope, though an *Heretick*, muſt not be thought to erre) were exhibited againſt him in the Council of *Conſtance*, and proved by ſufficient Teſtimonies. Theſe two Inſtances (not to name the *Sorceries* and Treaſons of *Gregory* the Seventh, nor the *Concubine* of *Nicholas* the Third; and to paſſe by the late pretty ſtories of *Donna Olympia*, who governed the *Roman* Chair, as *Themiſtocles* his little *Son* ruled *Athens*;) are more then enough to evidence, that even *his Holineſſe* himſelf may erre in point of *Morality*.

Baron. tom. 7. Anno 538.

And ſince *other* Vices are incident to the Biſhops of *Rome*, why ſhould we think it impoſſible for them to be a little tainted ſometimes with thoſe ſmall Infirmities of *Covetouſneſs*, *Pride*, and *Ambition*? Though St. *Bernard* indeed might tell his friend Pope *Eugenius*, *Apoſtolis interdicitur Dominatus*, *Chriſt* forbad his *Apoſtles* to exerciſe

Bern. de Conſid. ad *Eugen.* l. 2. c. 6.

any

any *Deſpotick* Power, at leaſt over one another; yet perhaps *Boniface* the Eighth might have in him ſome little remainders of unmortified *Pride*, which might prevail with him to accept the Title from others, yea and to ſtyle himſelf too *Mundi Dominum*, the *Lord* of the *World*. And though *Alexander* the Fifth, who profeſſed himſelf a *rich Biſhop*, a *poor Cardinall*, but a mere *beggarly Pope*, might perhaps deſerve that Character which St. *Paul* requires in a Biſhop, *not greedy of filthy lucre*: yet what may we think of *John* the Twenty Third, who was ſo *covetous* of Money, and heaped up ſo much Treaſure, that he thought himſelf concerned to brand that man for an Heretick, who ſhould dare affirm, that *Chriſt* and his *Apoſtles* had no Poſſeſſions in the World? *Papyr. Maſſ. in vit. Boniſ.*

Now then, if the *Roman* Biſhops, as well as other men, may poſſibly ſo far forget themſelves, as to be guilty of *Ambition* and *Avarice*; 'tis not reaſonable that we ſhould admit their Teſtimony for the Juſtification of thoſe Traditions wherein their own *Advantage* and *Honour* is ſo very much concerned: they are *Parties* ſo mightily intereſſed in this Cauſe, that there is ground enough to *ſuſpect* their *Evidence*, and to imagine, that they will repreſent the matter, not *impartially*, as it really ſtands; but with thoſe *favourable Conſtructions*, or *falſe Gloſſes* and Equivocations, which an *ambitious* or *covetous heart* may probably ſuggeſt, and a *bad Cauſe* doth certainly require. But,

2. Although the Teſtimony of the *Roman* Biſhops ſhould be admitted for the juſtification of their own Traditions, ſhould we be ſo kind as to

accept their Evidence in a Cauſe which ſo deeply concerns themſelves, nay, ſhould we paſs a candid interpretation upon it, and ſuppoſe it to be impartial; yet neither ſo would it doe their work, nor prove firm, ſure, and cogent. See why, upon a double ground.

1. The Teſtimonies of ſeveral *Roman* Biſhops, eſpecially thoſe early ones, who would indeed have been very credible Witneſſes in any matter which concerns the Church, have been *counterfeited* and notoriouſly *forged*.

Methinks we may uſe the ſame Conſideration to invalidate the Teſtimony of any *Roman Biſhop*, which *Bellarmine* himſelf doth to weaken and take off the Evidence of a *Roman Cardinall*. We find what horrid Crimes (if Simony, Hereſie, Sorcery and Adultery be ſuch indeed) are by ſeveral Authors laid to the Charge of Pope *Gregory* the Seventh. And becauſe theſe deteſtable Villanies do much reflect upon the *Honour* of the *Roman* See, and do intrench too much upon that Fundamental Point of the Pope's *Infallibility*; 'tis the great endeavour of *Bellarmine*, by all ways and means to wipe off this Guilt, and to make the world believe, that all theſe Vices, objected againſt (as he ſtyles him) an innocent Pope, were but unworthy *Reproaches* and baſe *Calumnies*, that were raiſed by *Tilmannus* and the *Centuriatours* out of a forged Book, that was fathered indeed upon Cardinal *Benno*, but was probably written (ſo *Bellarmine* would have it) by ſome *Lutheran* or other.

This kind of Argumentation we may juſtly retort upon the *Roman* Church, who juſtifie their

own

own Traditions, and unjuſtly charge us with Hereſie, as having departed from the true Faith of the Primitive and Catholick Church: and this they would fain prove by Teſtimonies produced out of ſome Writings, which are aſcribed to ſeveral ancient Biſhops of *Rome*: whereas 'tis very certain that thoſe Writings neither were, nor could be, theirs.

'Tis the great Honour of the *Roman* See, that, in the *three* firſt *Centuries*, the *Biſhops* who governed that Church were very choice and excellent Perſons: we reade that Thirty and one ſucceſſive Biſhops of theirs, even from *Linus* to *Sylveſter*, (if we except but *Hyginus* and *Pius*, who lived under the kinder Empire of *Antoninus Pius*) were *Martyrs*, or *Confeſſours* at leaſt. The memory of theſe Champions and ſtout Aſſertours of the true Catholick Faith being precious, and their Authority being venerable in the Church of *Chriſt*; ſome well-wiſhers to the preſent *Roman* Church, that there might be ſome pretence of great *Antiquity* for their ſuperſtitious *Novelties*, have written ſuch and ſuch *Epiſtles*, *Conſtitutions*, and other *Tracts*, in the names of theſe Primitive *Roman* Biſhops, which they have publiſhed and ſent abroad into the world with as much confidence as if they were *genuine* and *authentick* indeed.

What Authority ſuch Epiſtles have in the *Roman* Church, we learn from *Gratian*, who equals them to the Definitions of *General Councils*; and is not aſhamed to make St. *Auſtine* ſay, that they are equal to the very *written Word* of God. But St. *Auſtine* is ſo much wronged in being produced

by *Gratian* as the Authour of ſuch an intolerable Aſſertion, that *Bellarmine*, who for once hath ſomething more of Modeſty, doth thus excuſe it, *Deceptus eſt Gratianus ex depravato Codice quem ipſe habuit beati Auguſtini*, *Gratian* was deceived by a *corrupted* Copy which he had of St. *Auſtine's* Works. But however, though *Bellarmine* dare not equal theſe *Decretall Epiſtles* to the very *written Oracles* of God; yet 'tis clear enough, that himſelf, *Baronius*, and others of the *Roman* Faith, do uſe the *Authority* of theſe *forged Epiſtles* to countenance ſeveral Doctrines and Practices wherein the Reformed Church and theirs differ.

And yet for all this, there are ſeveral learned Writers of the *Roman* Church, who cannot but acknowledge that ſuch and ſuch *Epiſtles*, *Conſtitutions*, *Recognitions*, fathered upon their *Primitive* and Martyred Biſhops, are ſhrewdly ſuſpected, yea and clearly proved too, to be *falſe* and *counterfeit*. Thus *Lorinus*, *Verborum Domini liber tam eſt Apocryphus, quàm in quibus memorantur Clementis Recognitiones*; The Book of our *Lord's Words* is as Apocryphall, as the *Recognitions* of *Clemens*, wherein that Book is mentioned. He tells us indeed, *Clementis Conſtitutiones paulò majoris ſunt fidei*, the *Conſtitutions* of *Clemens* are of a little more Credit. But are theſe unqueſtionable? no; that he denieth: *Clementis libri Conſtitutionum non ſunt uſquequaque indubitatæ Authoritatis*, The Conſtitutions of *Clemens* are not of an Authority that is *undoubted* altogether. And what elſe can we think of thoſe *Decretal* Epiſtles that are aſcribed to *Zephyrinus*, which contain

Lor. in Act. 20. 35.

Lor. Act. 1. 13.

tain things *fooliſh*, *ridiculous*, and *falſe*: as, that the Conſecration of the Holy Cup muſt be in a veſſel of *Glaſſe* onely; that a Biſhop muſt be accuſed before *twelve* Judges, and that Evidence againſt him muſt be made by *ſeventy two* Witneſſes? How contrary is this, not onely to *Scripture*, but to thoſe very *Canons* which are aſcribed to the *Apoſtles*? whereof this is one, Εἰς μαρτυρίαν τὴν καθ' Ἑπισκόπου Αἰρετικὸν μὴ προσδέχεσθαι, ἀλλὰ μηδὲ πρὸς ἕνα μόνον· Ἐπὶ στόματι γὰρ δύο ἢ τριῶν μαρτύρων σταθήσεται πᾶν ῥῆμα. And to the ſame purpoſe the *Council* of *Nice* too, Ἐλέγχεσθω δὲ δύο ἢ τριῶν μαρτύρων. Theſe Canons, according to the Rules of St. *Paul*, require the Teſtimony of *two* or *three* Witneſſes onely even againſt a Biſhop; whereas the pretended Decree of *Zephyrinus* demands *ſeventy two*, and that with an Appeal to *Rome*, which is enough to prove it *falſe* and forged.

Such a *counterfeit* Epiſtle too was the ſecond of thoſe two fathered upon *Pontianus*, which begins thus, *Pontianus Sanctæ & Univerſalis Eccleſiæ Epiſcopus*, *Pontianus the Biſhop of the Holy and Univerſal Church.* This Title, in thoſe early days unknown to the World, being as yet not *claimed* nor *aſſumed* by any *Roman* Biſhop, but afterwards *denied* and decried by *Gregory* the Great, gives us a fair and clear Evidence, that this Epiſtle is *counterfeit* and written by ſome other hand, as well as thoſe of *Fabianus*, *Stephanus*, and ſome other ſucceeding Biſhops, with a deſign to pretend ſomething of *Antiquity* for the defence of thoſe unwarrantable Doctrines and Practices of the preſent *Roman* Church, for which they can produce no fair and clear Evidence from the *genuine* and

acknowledged writings of the moſt ancient Fathers.

And as for the *Decrees*, Conſtitutions and Canons of the Biſhops of *Rome* which have ſate in that Chair ſince the time of *Sylveſter*; what ſecurity have we but that theſe alſo may have been *changed*, *corrupted*, and *falſified*, according as the exigence of the *Roman* Church hath ſo required? *Bellarmine* tells us, that Pope *Leo* complained, that whilſt he himſelf was yet alive, the *Græcians* had corrupted his Epiſtle to *Flavianus*: and why might not the *Latines*, for their own ends, doe as much? What reaſon have *we* to give credit to ſuch and ſuch Papal *Decretals*, when *Bellarmine* himſelf, being preſſed with a *Canon* of *Zacharias* that made againſt him, had little to ſay but this, *Zachariæ Canon mihi valde ſuſpectus eſt*, *This Canon of Zacharias I do very much ſuſpect?* And the truth is, we are ſo much of his mind, and have ſo much cauſe to be jealous, that many *Canons* and Conſtitutions aſcribed to ſuch and ſuch Biſhops of *Rome* were indeed none of theirs, but onely *forged* and counterfeited, that we cannot upon their Authority admit thoſe Doctrines and Practices for which we can find no warrant in the *written* Word of God. But,

Leo in Ep. 83. ad Palæſt.

Bellar. de Pontif. R. l. 4. c. 12.

2. The Teſtimony of *Roman* Biſhops, in the Cauſe of Traditions, is not firm and ſure, becauſe the *Pope*, at leaſt in matters of *this* nature, notwithſtanding their Pretence of his being Infallible, may poſſibly be deceived himſelf; and, if ſo, he may deceive us too.

'Tis the free Conceſſion of *Bellarmine*, and that, as he ſaith, wherein *all Catholicks* do agree, *Poſſe Ponti-*

Pontificem, etiam ut Pontificem, & cum suo cœtu Consiliariorum, vel cum Generali Concilio, errare in Controversiis facti particularibus, quæ ex Informatione Testimoniisque hominum pendent; That the *Pope*, considered *as Pope*, with his *private* or *General* Council, may erre in *particular matters* of *Fact*, which depend upon the *Information* and Testimonies of other men. And that seems to be the Case in hand: the business of *Traditions* is a *matter* of *Fact*, and the whole Controversie under our present Disquisition is onely this, Whether *Christ* delivered to his Apostles, the Apostles to the Primitive Bishops, they to their immediate Successours, and so from Age to Age, such and such particular Doctrines and Practices as are now contended for by the *Roman* Church. So that the whole Question in hand being concerned about *matters* of *Fact*, wherein they themselves acknowledge the *Fallibility* of the *Pope*, we have little Reason to acquiesce in his Determinations, and to be so well satisfied with his Testimony, as to think our selves obliged thereby to *believe* and *doe* those things which the Scriptures do neither *assert* nor *command*.

But what if the *Pope* may erre in considerable Points of *Faith* too, and become an *Heretick*? are we obliged to believe his Testimony even then too? *Photius* tells us, that by the Canon-Law, *Phot.* Tit. 12. ἐν δικαστηρίῳ οὐ καταμαρτυροῦσιν Ὀρθοδόξου Αἱρετικοὶ, Hereticks might not in any Judicature be admitted to bear witness against any Orthodox Christian within the Church. And certainly, if Heresie be a Crime of that nature, as that it hath been thought enough to *exclude* or *evacuate* any man's *Evidence* in *Civil* Causes;

Cauſes; we ſhall have but little reaſon to admit any perſon, that is as liable to Hereſie as other men, as an *infallible* Witneſſe in matters of *Spiritual* and Sacred Concern.

And that ſeveral Biſhops of *Rome* have been, not onely ſhrewdly *ſuſpected*, but publickly *accuſed* and *condemned* too, and that of the fouleſt *Hereſies*, 'tis not to be denied by any man whoſe *brow* is not made of *Braſs*. 'Tis recorded by ſeveral Authours, and thoſe of good name and credit, that ſome *Roman Biſhops* have been *Monotheliteſ*, ſome *Montaniſts*, ſome *Eutychians*, ſome *Arrians*, yea and ſome downright *Atheiſts* too. But the Charge being heavy againſt them, and the Honour of the *Roman* See lying at ſtake, and the Pope's *Infallibility* alſo being herein ſomewhat concerned, we muſt enquire into the Witneſſes, and ſee that they are ἀξιόπιστοι, ſuch as deſerve to be believed. For ſo juſtly tender is the Chriſtian Church of the *reputation* of her *Biſhops*, that ſhe will not admit *all* perſons whatſoever to bring in Evidence againſt them. No, the ſixth *Canon* of the Second General Council forbids it, Μὴ ἀνεξετάστως προσίεσθαι τὰς κατηγορίας, μηδὲ πᾶσαν ἐπιτρέπειν τὰς κατηγορίας παρεῖναι κατ' αὐτῶν οἰκονομούντων τὰς Ἐκκλησίας. No man ſhall be admitted to accuſe a *Biſhop*, till firſt his *quality* be duely examined; nor ſhall *every fellow* be ſuffered to exhibit Articles againſt the Governours of the Church. And as every man might not accuſe a Biſhop, ſo whoſoever wrongfully did it, though it were but a Biſhop *elect*, and yet to be ordained, he was ſeverely puniſhed: Ἐπιμίαν δηνεκῆ ἀκοινωνησίας ὑποβληθήσεται, Let his Penalty be a long Excommunication. So ſaith the *Canon-Law*.

So

So then, since there is an Indictment of no less Crimes then *Atheism* and *Heresie* drawn up and exhibited against several *Bishops*, and those of the *Roman* See too, who claim a Superiority over all Bishops besides, as being the onely *Successours* of the *Prime* Apostle, and the immediate *Vicars* of *Christ*; 'tis of a considerable Concern, that what is thus *alledged* against them be well *proved* too.

And here, that Pope *Marcellinus* offered Incense to Idols, might be proved with ease and evidence enough: but because he did it barely for *fear* of *Diocletian*, and afterwards repented and became a *Martyr*, we *pass* him by. *Rhenanus* saith of Pope *Zephyrinus*, *Episcopus Romanus Montanizat*, The *Bishop* of *Rome* embraceth the *Heresie* of *Montanus*. So *Tertullian*, who was too much of the same Opinion, witnesseth too. That Pope *Honorius* the First was a *Monothelite*, and denied the distinction of two Wills in *Christ*, we have the Testimonies of Pope *Agatho*, *Leo* the Second, *Adrian* the Second, besides the Evidence of the *Sixth* General *Council*, wherein he was publickly condemned for an *Heretick*. That Pope *Liberius*, and his Antipope *Felix*, were *Arrians*, is testified by *Athanasius*, and St. *Hierom* too. Nor need we be ashamed to produce the Testimony of *Calvin* and *Erasmus*, who do both affirm that Pope *John* the Twenty second denied the *Immortality* of the *Soul*. And what if we mention that Expression of *Picus Mirandula? Alium meminimus Pontificem, qui nullum Deum credens*, &c. We remember another Pope, who believing that there is no God, *&c.* But that of the Council of *Basil* must not be forgot, which, having voted a

Rhenan. Annot. in Tertul. lib. contra Praxeam.

General Council to be *above* the Pope, could not poſſibly give a better Reaſon for it then this; *Multi Pontifices in Errores & Hæreſes lapſi eſſe leguntur*, &c. 'Tis recorded that *many Popes* have fell into Errours and *Hereſies*, &c. And the truth is, there is no Pope, who ſtifly maintains thoſe Doctrines which aſſert the worſhipping of *Angels*, *Saints*, *Images*, *Reliques*, a *Morſel* of *Bread*, or a *Conſecrated Wafer*, but is a down-right *Heretick*: and ſince he is ſo, we cannot ſo far betray our own Reaſon, as to reſt ſatisfied and be convinced, that ſuch and ſuch Doctrines, which have no Countenance in Scripture, are Apoſtolical, by the Teſtimony of any *Roman* Biſhop, who, notwithſtanding the Pretence of his Infallibility, is proved to be obnoxious to groſs Errours, even *Hereſie* and *Atheiſm* it ſelf, as well as other men. But,

III. The Champions of the *Roman* Faith do endeavour to juſtifie their unwritten Traditions by the Teſtimonies of the *Fathers*; who are produced as Witneſſes which ſeem, in their account, to ſpeak a great deal for them.

Thus *Bellarmine* cites *Ignatius*, who is an early and ſubſtantial Witneſs indeed, as being σύγχρονος τῶν Ἀποστόλων, the Coetane, Collegue and Scholar of the very Apoſtles themſelves: and of him *Euſebius* thus records, Προὔτρεπε ἀπεῖξ ἔχεσθ τῆς τῶν Ἀποστόλων παραδόσεως, ἣν ὑπὲρ ἀσφαλείας καὶ ἐγγράφως ἤδη μαρτυρόμενος διαπεδόσθαι ἀναγκαῖον ἡγεῖτο. He exhorted the Chriſtians to ſtick faſt to the *Traditions* of the Apoſtles; and, that they might be preſerved incorrupt, not long before his *Martyrdom* he judged it neceſſary that they ſhould be written. This Teſtimony is clear for Traditions; and ſo is that of *Dionyſius* the

Euſeb. Hiſt. l. 3. c. 36.

Areopa-

Areopagite too, Οἱ πρῶτοι τῆς καθ' ἡμᾶς ἱεραρχίας Καθηγημόνες τὰ ὑπερφυέστατα ἐγγράφοις τε αὐτῶν καὶ ἀγράφοις μυήσεσι καὶ τοὺς ἱερεῖς ἡμῖν ἔδοσαν θεσμούς, &c. The first Founders of the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy (the Apostles) delivered to us Heavenly Mysteries by Instructions *written* and *unwritten* according to the Sacred Laws. And thus great St. *Basil* too, Ἀποστολικὸν εἶναι καὶ τὸ τοῖς ἀγράφοις παραδόσεσι θεμένειν. To persevere in *unwritten* Traditions, I think 'tis *Apostolical*. And so *Tertullian* also mentions several particular Observations, *quas, sine ullo Scripturæ Instrumento, solius Traditionis titulo, & exinde Consuetudinis patrocinio, vindicamus*, &c. which the Church practised and defended, without the Authority of any Scripture, upon the bare credit of *Tradition*, and the Patronage of Custom, &c.

Dionys. Areop. Hier. Eccles. c. 1.

Basil. Magn. de Sp. S. c. 29.

Tertul. de Corona Mil.

Now, this being *Argumentum Achilleum*, one of the strongest Arguments which the *Romish* Church can possibly urge for their *Traditions*, we shall give an Answer to it in some distinct Particulars.

1. Whatever Traditions are expressly and *dogmatically* delivered by the *Universality* of the ancient *Fathers*, we do readily embrace, own, and defend.

That Expression of St. *Basil* the Great we do willingly close with, Δυσωπητικὰ τὰ παλαιὰ τῶν δογμάτων, οἷονεὶ πολιᾷ τινι τῇ ἀρχαιότητι τὸ Αἰδέσιμον ἔχοντα. Old Doctrines are to be reverenced; and for, as it were, their hoary *Antiquity* they deserve a *Veneration*. But withall those Doctrines that may justly challenge a respect for their Age must be such as were *generally* received, believed, and practised; according to that Rule which *Vincentius Lyrinensis*

Basil. M. de Sp. S. c. 29.

gives us, *Id teneamus quod ſemper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus creditum eſt*, Let us hold that which hath been believed at *all times*, in *all places*, and by *all Chriſtians*. And for this St. *Auſtine* gives this Reaſon, *Illa quæ non ſunt ſcripta, ſed tradita, cuſtodimus, quæ quidem toto terrarum orbe obſervantur, dantur intelligi vel ab ipſis Apoſtolis, vel plenariis Conciliis (quorum eſt in Eccleſia ſaluberrima Authoritas) commendata atque ſtatuta retineri: ſicuti quòd Domini Paſſio, & Reſurrectio, & Aſcenſio in Cœlum, & adventus de Cœlo Spiritûs Sancti, anniverſariâ Solennitate celebrantur; & ſiquid aliud tale occurrerit, quod ſervatur ab univerſa quácunque ſe diffundit Eccleſia.* This Expreſſion commends the *belief* and *practice* of thoſe *Traditions*, ſuppoſing them to be the Inſtitutions either of the *Apoſtles* themſelves, or ancient General *Councils*, which were unanimouſly obſerved by the *univerſal* Church.

Aug. in Epiſt. ad Jan. 118.

But now, that ſuch and ſuch traditional *Doctrines* and *Uſages* were indeed *generally* received by the *whole* Chriſtian Church, we muſt have clear Proofs from credible Witneſſes, that have given Teſtimony thereunto throughout *all* the reſpective *Centuries* and Ages of the Church. This is no more then was urged long ſince by *Gregory Nyſſene*, for the Ratification and full Eſtabliſhment of all ſuch *Uſages* and *Doctrines* as pretend to Antiquity. Ἀρκεῖ γὰρ εἰς Ἀπόδειξιν τῆς ἡμετέρας λόγου, τὸ ἔχειν παράδοσιν ἥκουσαν πρὸς ἡμᾶς Πατέρων, εἴ τινα κλῆσιν δ' ἀκολουθίας ἐκ τῶν Ἀποστόλων δὲ καὶ τῶν ἑφεξῆς Ἁγίων παραμεφθέντα· For this (and nothing leſſe) is ſufficient for the Proof of our Aſſertion, that we have a *Tradition* derived to us from the *Fathers*, as it were

Greg. Nyſſ. Orat. 3. contra Eunom.

were a certain Inheritance deſcending by entail from the *Apoſtles* by thoſe Saints who were *all along* their Succeſſours.

And this is the onely thing which we demand from the *Roman* Church, being ready to acknowledge the *Truth* of all *Doctrines*, and the *Equity* of all *Practices*, which the *Univerſality* of the *Fathers* have left upon Record as things *believed* and *done* in the firſt and pureſt Ages of the Church. And thus to doe we have a great Encouragement from that Expreſſion of *Tertullian*, *Conſtat omnem Doctrinam quæ cum Eccleſiis Apoſtolicis, Matricibus & Originalibus Fidei, conſpiret, veritati deputandam; id ſine dubio tenentem quod Eccleſiæ ab Apoſtolis, Apoſtoli à Chriſto, Chriſtus à Deo accepit*, &c. 'Tis manifeſt that every Doctrine which agreeth with the *Apoſtolick* Churches, which were the *Wombs* and *Originals* of Faith, muſt be eſteemed a Truth; as holding that which thoſe *Churches* received from the *Apoſtles*, the *Apoſtles* from *Chriſt*, and *Chriſt* from *God*. *Tertullian.* de Præſcript. Hæret. c. 21.

So that whatſoever Traditions the Church of *Rome* can prove to be *Apoſtolical* by an unanimous Conſent of *all* the ancient, learned and holy *Biſhops* and *Doctours*, who from Age to Age have governed and taught the Church, though ſuch Traditions are no-where recorded in the *written* Word, yet being obliged by the *univerſal* Teſtimony of all Antiquity to eſteem them Apoſtolical Inſtitutions, and conſequently no-way repugnant to Holy Writ, we ſhall moſt readily receive and practiſe them upon the very firſt Conviction. For ſo great a reſpect hath the *Church*

of *England* for all her pious *Forefathers* in *Chriſt*, that ſhe doth moſt chearfully follow their Example in every thing that is convenient and laudable; and doth pay to venerable *Antiquity* all that imaginable Reverence which is conſiſtent with that *inviolable Rule* ſhe walks by, which is the *written Word* of God. But,

2. Although we are thus ready to embrace all thoſe Doctrines and Practices which can be recommended to us by the *general Conſent* and Approbation of Antiquity; yet the Teſtimonies of ſuch and ſuch *particular Fathers*, which the *Romaniſts* produce for the juſtification of their unwritten Traditions, we cannot think our ſelves obliged to accept, nor is it ſafe to comply with them in *all* Points whatſoever.

'Tis the great Prerogative of the *Scripture* alone to deſerve and require our Aſſent to every thing that is there delivered by every *particular* Prophet, Evangeliſt, and Apoſtle. When once we do but clearly underſtand the meaning of Divine Revelations, and comprehend what ſuch and ſuch a Text doth *import*, there is no room for any farther *Scrutiny* or Examination; but all our buſineſs is to *believe* and *practiſe*. Thus ſtands the caſe with the *Word* of *God*, every line whereof is of unqueſtionable Authority: but as for the *Writings* of *men*, how holy or learned ſoever, but not infallibly guided by God's unerring and holy Spirit, we have ground enough, in all Points and matters of *Controverſie*, which the Scriptures do not clearly determine, to *pauſe* a while, *ſuſpend* our *faith*, and not immediately to give too *quick* an Aſſent to ſuch and ſuch Aſſertions,

tions, till we have taken mature Advice, and deliberately conſidered what is the *matter* of ſuch and ſuch Propoſitions that relate to the *Worſhip* of *God*, *Points* of *Faith*, or other *Concerns* of the *Church*, as well as *who* it is that recommends them. And for this we have ſeveral Reaſons.

1. That the whole Church of God in after-Ages ſhould, without all farther Examination, give an immediate Aſſent to all Propoſitions, Principles, Concluſions, Doctrines or Practices, which are laid down, recorded or recommended in the Works of ſuch and ſuch ancient Fathers, is a thing which thoſe *Fathers* themſelves did never *doe* or *expect*. The truth is, to give a firm and quick Credit to every thing which ſuch or ſuch a perſon hath ſaid, were an inſtance of ſuch a Reſpect as the *beſt* of *men* cannot *deſerve*, nor did the *beſt* of the *Fathers* ever *require* or *ſhew*.

We are in this to imitate St. *Auſtine*, who told St. *Hierom* thus, *Alios (Scriptores, præter Canonicos) ità lego, ut quantâlibet Sanctitate Doctrinâve præpolleant, non ideo verum putem quia Ipſi ità ſenſerunt, ſed quia mihi vel per illos Authores Canonicos, vel probabili ratione, quòd à vero non abhorreat, perſuadere potuerunt*; When I reade any Authours that are not *Canonicall*, how holy or learned ſoever, I do not preſently grant this or that to be a truth barely becauſe thoſe Authours thought ſo, &c. And as he reſerved to himſelf this liberty of diſſent, when he found juſt cauſe, from other mens Writings; ſo did he as willingly allow the ſame liberty to all other perſons who ſhould become the Readers of his. So he tells his friend *Fortunatianus*, *Talis ego ſum in Scriptis aliorum*,

Aug. ad Hieron. Ep. 19.

Aug. ad Fortunat. Ep. 111.

alierum, tales volo eſſe Intellectores meorum; Such am I in other mens Works, and ſuch would I have other men be in mine. But how is that? he tells us; *Neminem velim ſic amplecti omnia mea, ut me ſequatur, niſi in iis quibus me non errare perſpexerit*; I would have no man ſo to credit what I write, as immediately to comply with my Judgment, except it be in thoſe things onely wherein he perceives me to be in the right. 'Tis a *Golden Rule* which he elſewhere gives us, *Audi, dicit Dominus: non, dicit Donatus, aut Rogatus, aut Vincentius, aut Hilarius, aut Ambroſius, aut Auguſtinus; ſed, dicit Dominus.* Hear and believe, not every thing which ſuch and ſuch a *man* ſaith, but what *God* ſaith.

Aug. de bono Perſeverantiæ, c. 21.

Aug. ad Vincentium, Ep. 48.

So then, though perhaps we may diſſent, in ſome particular matters not determined in the *written* Word, from ſuch and ſuch *particular* Fathers; though we have entred our Diſlike and do ſolemnly proteſt againſt ſome Expreſſions that have unwarily dropped from ſome of their Pens: yet ſince theſe good men have declared themſelves to be no-way injured or affronted thereby; we do not need (or, if we did, we ſhould not matter) a *Pardon* from his *Holineſs*, who wants indeed ſome better Evidences to confirm the *Validity* of his *Indulgencies*, and make them *ſaleable* in *Engliſh* Markets. But,

2. To comply with every thing that *ſuch* and *ſuch* a *Father* hath aſſerted, and to receive *all* their Teſtimonies indifferently as undoubted Truths, is a thing ſo *groſs* and irrational, that even our Adverſaries of *Rome themſelves* will not doe it.

'Tis

'Tis indeed very uſual with them to exclaim againſt us as perſons that have no Reverence for Antiquity, but reject the Fathers, and tread them under foot: but the truth is, if it be a fault to diſſent from ancient Writers in any thing whatever, if our refuſal to ſubſcribe to their Opinions in all matters of Controverſie may be interpreted as a *Contempt* done to thoſe excellent Perſons, from whom in ſome things we diſagree; then do we retort this Argument upon our Adverſaries, and, having a juſt ground of *Recrimination*, we do tell and can eaſily prove to the world, that if this be indeed *our Crime*, it is certainly *theirs* too.

That the Church of *Rome* doth give an *univerſal Aſſent* to whatſoever *all* the Fathers have written, will not be imagined by any perſon who conſiders what the *Jeſuits* and other *Doctours*, who well underſtood the Senſe of that Church, and durſt not openly contradict it, have left upon Record. I remember that expreſſion of *Bellarmine*, who, being urged with a Sentence of *Tertullian* againſt *Zephyrinus*, who was *Biſhop* of *Rome*, had little elſe to reply but onely this, *Non eſſe omnino fidem habendam Tertulliano in hac parte*, *Tertullian* in *this* matter (becauſe *Bellarmine* did not like it) is not at all to be believed. No, nor St. *Chryſoſtom* neither, if he deliver any thing that contradicts the *Romiſh* Faith. *Alium ſcopulum vitare Lector debet, nè Chryſoſtomum legens*, &c. ſaith *Maldonate*; The Reader muſt avoid another Rock, leſt perhaps, reading St. *Chryſoſtom*, he run into an *Errour*. And as for thoſe two great Worthies of the Chriſtian Church, St. *Ambroſe* and

Bellarmin. de Rom. Pont. l. 4. c. 8.

Mald. in Luc. 16. 29.

Lorinus Act. 1. 12. St. *Auſtine*, *Lorinus* did not think them *infallible*, when he ventured to ſay, *Memoriâ lapſum oportet Ambroſium, idémque ſtatuendum de Auguſtino*, &c. St. *Ambroſe* forgot himſelf, and ſo did St. *Auſtine* too.

Indeed, whatſoever is delivered by *Tertullian*, *Chryſoſtom*, *Ambroſe*, *Auſtine*, or any other ancient Father, how *agreeable* ſoever it be to the written *Word* of God, yet if it be *inconſiſtent* with the preſent *Traditions* and Practices of the *Roman* Church, they will not grant it to be a Truth. And if ſo, if the *Romaniſts* themſelves, whenever their *Intereſt* doth ſo require, do make ſo bold with the Fathers, as to *ſuſpect* their *Judgments*, and *deny* their *Authority*; methinks they ſhould be ſo ingenuous, as to allow *us* the ſame liberty of Diſſent, which they take to *themſelves*. If *they* diſſent from *Tertullian*, *Chryſoſtom*, *Ambroſe*, *Auſtine*, and other Fathers, and that in thoſe very matters wherein thoſe Fathers have clearly, *dogmatically* and deſignedly delivered their Judgments; why may not *we* diſſent from *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Origen*, and ſome others, eſpecially in thoſe things which they have onely *rhetorically* and *accidentally* mentioned, and yet are now violently drawn, forced and *wreſted* to countenance thoſe Articles of the *Trent* Faith whereof thoſe Fathers did never dream?

But however, what juſt ground we have to diſſent from ſuch and ſuch *particular* Fathers in ſuch and ſuch particular caſes, eſpecially in thoſe Points now in *Controverſie* betwixt the *Reformed* and *Roman* Church, we ſhall ſhew in two Particulars.

1. The

1. The first Reason (and that which indeed our Adversaries may justly plead as well as we) why we cannot think our selves obliged to comply with every *particular Father*, in every particular thing which they have delivered, is, Because they were but *Men*, and so *might erre*; and indeed often *did*, and some of them *foully* too.

'Tis very usuall with the Champions of the *Roman* Church, to produce the Testimonies of severall persons who are men of great Name and Authority in the Church of God, to justifie severall of those Traditions with which we can by no means comply. I remember *Bellarmine* produces and cites *Ignatius*, *Dionysius*, *Justin Martyr*, *Irenæus*, *Origen*, *Clemens*, and others, for whom we have that signal Respect and Veneration which is justly due to their Piety, Learning and Antiquity: but withall we cannot forget, that the very best of the Fathers were subject to Mistakes and Errours, whereby they shewed themselves to be but *men*. And the truth is, we have so many and so sad Examples of Learned and Pious persons before us, who have been miserably deceived by meer *Pretensions* of *Antiquity*, that we shall not easily suffer our selves to be seduced by the same Delusions into the Belief and Practice of any Traditions, except we can find in them what *Irenæus* found in those mentioned by *Polycarp*, τῆς γραφῆς συμφωνίαν, an Agreeableness to the written *Word* of God. *Euseb.* Hist. l. 5. c. 20.

We cannot forget what great Mischiefs to the Church of God the Authority of *Papias*, *Origen*, and some others, did in Primitive times. That this *Papias* was τοῦ Ἀποστόλων συμφοιτητὴς, the Disciple of

the Apostles, the Auditour of St. *John*, the Companion of *Polycarp*, is, I think, universally granted; and that he received such and such Traditions from the *Daughters* of *Philip* the Evangelist at *Hierapolis*, was, as *Eusebius* tells us, his own Assertion: and yet, for all that, the same Historian informs us, that this very man, relying too much upon *Tradition*, was so far surprized as to vent ξένας διδασκαλίας, *strange Doctrines*. And if so, shall we think our selves so far obliged to espouse and own all his Opinions, because they are *old* ones, as to become *Chiliasts*, and to be imposed upon, as *Irenæus* himself and many more then were, τὴν Ἀρχαιότητα τῷ ἀνδρὶ προσβεβλημένοι, from that Respect and *Veneration* which they had for his *Antiquity*?

Euseb. Hist. l. 3. c. 36.

And as for *Origen*, whose Testimony the Church of *Rome* makes exceeding much of, as a great Patron of some Traditions which are advantageous to them; we do give him all that Respect which becomes him to receive, and us to shew: his learned Disputations against *Celsus*, his Confutations of the *Psycho-Pannuchists*, his Conviction and Conversion of *Beryllus*, that *Arrian* Heretick, his readiness to *Martyrdom*, his labours in *Preaching*, *Catechizing*, and *Writing*, have made his Name famous and his Memory venerable in the Church of God. But withall, had this excellent Person nothing of Errour to allay and stain his Glory? Doth the Church of *Rome* indeed think us, or themselves either, obliged to embrace every Opinion as an undoubted Truth, that hath the Patronage of *Origen*'s Name? What if *Origen* seem, as our Adversaries contend, to coun-

countenance their Doctrine of *Purgatory*, which was doubtleſs the golden *Dream* and Invention of *Plato*? muſt we therefore acknowledge it to be as certain a *Truth*, as that there is an *Heaven* for Saints and an *Hell* for Sinners? Why doth not *Bellarmine* give the ſame Credit to *Origen*, when he diſcourſeth of the Creation of *many Worlds*, as when he diſcourſeth of *Purgatory*? I remember, *Photius* mentions ſome Doctrines broached by *Origen*, and afterwards promoted by *Didymus* and *Evagrius*, that were his Followers, which, I hope, the greateſt Sticklers for the *Roman* Religion will not allow. Τέλος τῆς ἀπελευτήτε κολάσεως ἐφηρίζοντο· τοῖς πονηροῖς Δαίμοσι τὸ ἀρχαῖον ἀξίωμα ἐχαρίζοντο· They determined that there ſhould be an *end* of Hell's *endleſſe* Torments; they taught that the very *Devils* themſelves ſhould one day be reſtored to their former Dignity. Theſe Opinions, being ſo *welcome* to the *worſt* of men, grew apace: but withall, being ſo *deſtructive* to the Chriſtian *Religion*, *Juſtinian* the Emperour, in the year 551. called the fifth *Oecumenicall Council* at *Conſtantinople*, where this Errour of *Origen* and his Followers, by the joynt Suffrages of one hundred and ſixty five Biſhops, was exploded, condemned, and anathematized, as being, what *Photius* rightly calleth it, παρόκλησις πρὸς ἁμαρτίαν πᾶσαν, an Encouragement to all manner of Villany; even the chief of thoſe δόγματα ἀσεβῆ, wicked Opinions, which were broached ὑπὸ Ὠριγένους παραφρονήσαντος, by *Origen* when he was out of his wits, as *Nilus* doth inform us.

Photius de Synod. Concil. 5.

Nilus de Synod. Concil. 5.

And, certainly, that Doctrine of *Purgatory*, for which the Teſtimony of *Origen* is ſo much urged

by the *Roman* Church, deſerves the ſame *Cenſure* too; as being a conſiderable Provocation to the Commiſſion of thoſe pleaſing Sins, the Puniſhment whereof, how long or how ſhort it ſhall be, is, according to their Doctrine, at the Pleaſure of the *Pope*'s *Mercy* and the *Offender*'s *Purſe*. And methinks 'tis ſtrange, that ſuch a Tradition as this, which can never be delivered from the juſt imputation of *encouraging Vice*, ſhould, becauſe mentioned by *Origen* and his Followers, be declared *Apoſtolicall*, and equalled to that written and ſure Word of *Chriſt*, from which it receives ſufficient *Confutations*, but nothing of *Countenance*, whatever the *Romiſh* Church may pretend.

But, alas! *Origen* is but one of many that are cited as *Patrons* and Abettours of the *Romiſh Traditions*: there is another Perſon as well as *Origen*, who lived, as *Euſebius* words it, ἔγγιστα τῆς θεοῦ Ἀποστόλων διαδοχῆς, in the very next Age to the Apoſtles, whoſe Teſtimony is often urged in this matter too; I mean, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, who flouriſhed in the reign of *Commodus*, and was the Scholar of *Pantenus*: which two were the firſt that I meet with who delivered the Principles of Chriſtian Religion in a *Catecheticall* way in publick *Schools*, and for that deſerve an Honour.

Euſeb. Hiſt. l. 6. c. 13.

What *Euſebius* reports concerning this *Clemens* cannot be denied; Πλείσης χρηστομαθείας ἔμπλεοι οἱ τοῦ Ἀνδρὸς λόγοι, This man's Books are full of much excellent *Learning*: ſo excellent, that *Chemnitius* ſaith expreſly of him, *In tota Antiquitate habitus fuit vir celeberrimus*, In all Antiquity there was not a man ſo famous as he. But yet for all that, he fell into many *ſtrange* and heterodox *Opinions*; ſuch,

ſuch, I ſuppoſe, as our *Adverſaries* themſelves will by no means allow. He telleth us, that our Bleſſed Saviour preached but *one* year onely: that the Apoſtles, being departed from the World, preached to the *Dead*; and converting ſome of them, *raiſed* them to life again. He countenanced the Tenents of *Anabaptiſts*, that Chriſtians ought not to *ſwear*, nor *implead* one another before any Tribunal whatſoever. He affirmed, that if men who were once Baptized and enlightned fell into Sin, God perhaps might grant them μετάνοιαν μίαν καὶ δευτέραν, place of Repentance for *once* or *twice*, but no more for ever: and yet notwithſtanding, as if he had forgot himſelf, and were not conſtant to his own Opinion, he ſaith elſewhere, that if men repent, εἴτε ἐνταῦθα, εἴτε ἀλλαχῇ, οὐδεὶς τόπος ἀργὸς τῆς Εὐποιΐας Θεοῦ, there is no place, either in this world or in the next, void of the Goodneſs of God.

And methinks, if this excellent and learned Perſon were betrayed into ſuch groſs and abſurd Opinions as are directly contrary to the written Word, through thoſe *Traditions* which had even thus early crept into the Church, and were fathered upon St. *Paul*, St. *Peter*, and other Apoſtles; we muſt beg, and may juſtly expect, our very Adverſaries pardon, if we ſtill ſuſpect that ſuch and ſuch Traditions, mentioned by this *Clemens*, are very far from being, as *Bellarmine* contends, *Apoſtolicall*.

But although *Clemens Alexandrinus* fell into ſuch erroneous and fond Opinions, that they have given the Church juſt occaſion, in doubtfull matters, to like his Teſtimony ſo much the worſe; yet what hath *Tertullian* done to *forfeit* his

his *Credit*, and so far to *blemish* his *Reputation*, that the large Testimony which he also gives in the case of *Traditions* should be questioned too? *Tertullian* was indeed a learned *Preacher* of the *African* Church; a man that confuted *Marcion*, and wrote excellent *Apologies* for the persecuted Saints of God; a man that is styled by *Eusebius* Ἀνὴρ τά τε ἄλλα ἔνδοξος, καὶ τῶν μάλιστα ἐπὶ Ῥώμης λαμπρῶν, the most famous of all the *Latine* Writers: and yet notwithstanding, when he treats of Religious matters not contained within our Bibles, we have too much ground in some things to suspect *his* Judgment too; and for so doing, *Bellarmine* himself hath given us his own Example.

Euseb. Hist. l. 2. c. 2.

'Tis notoriously known, that this Person of excellent Parts shewed himself to be but a *son* of *Adam*, when, not finding that Respect from the *Roman Clergy* which he might have expected, through *Discontent* and Anger he miserably fell off from the *Orthodox* Christians, and took up the detestable Opinions of that *Phrygian* Heretick *Montanus*. What were the Opinions of this *Montanus*, *Apollonius* in *Eusebius* tells us. οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ διδάξας λύσεις γάμων, &c. This was he that taught the world to *dissolve* that sacred bond of *Wedlock*; this is he that taught his Disciples such and such Doctrines *tanquam à Paracleto traditas*, saith *Chemnitius*, as if he had received them from the Blessed Spirit of God; this is he whom his *Followers* took to be the *Paraclete*, but whom *sober* persons looked upon, as *Eusebius* tells us, ὡς ἐνεργούμενον καὶ Δαιμονιακὸν, as a man *possessed* and acted by the *Devil*; who had two women, *Priscilla* and *Maximilla*, to be his *Prophetesses*.

Euseb. Hist. l. 5.

And

And certainly, if this *Montanus* were ſuch a monſtrous Villain, 'tis as well ſad as ſtrange to think, that ſuch a man as *Tertullian* was ſhould ever be ſo much tranſported with *Paſſion* upon ſuch and ſuch *Neglects*, or perhaps *Indignities*, received from ſome Clergy-men at *Rome*, as to make ſuch a Defection from the true Faith, as if, for ſome Affronts received from ſome particular perſons, he meant to revenge himſelf upon the whole Chriſtian Church, by patronizing the curſed Doctrines of ſo vile an Heretick. But however, ſince 'tis clear that he did ſo, we are by no means bound to believe, what indeed he himſelf doth never affirm, that *all* thoſe *Traditions* which we find recorded in his Writings are of *Divine Originall*; becauſe we have ground enough to ſuſpect, that he might receive ſome of them at leaſt from *Montanus*, or ſome other unwarrantable hand, rather then from *Apoſtles* or Apoſtolicall men.

But may not St. *Cyprian* paſs for an unqueſtionable Witneſs, if *Tertullian* do ſomewhat fail? Was not this *Cyprian* the renowned *Biſhop* of *Carthage*, the ſtout *Champion* of *Chriſt*'s true *Religion*, yea and his faithful *Martyr* too? And doth not this eminent Perſon give Teſtimony to juſtifie ſome of thoſe *Traditions*, and to prove them *Apoſtolicall*, which are now received in the *Roman* Church, and yet have not the leaſt Countenance from the written Word of God?

What Great St. *Baſil* once ſaid of *Dionyſius Alexandrinus*, may, without any Affront or Injury to St. *Cyprian*'s name, be affirmed of him too, Οὐ πάντα θαυμάζομεν τῦ Ἀνδρός· ἔστι δ' ἃ καὶ παντελῶς διαγελῶμεν. *Baſil. M.* ad Max. Philoſ. Ep. 41.

We do not *admire whatever* that man ſaid; but *ſome* things we *condemn* too. We are of St. *Auſtine's* mind, who writes thus of *Cyprian*, *Cypriani literas non ut Canonicas habeo, ſed ex Canonicis conſidero: Quod in eis Divinarum Scripturarum Authoritati congruit, cum laude ejus accipio; quod autem non congruit, cum pace ejus reſpuo.* I do not take St. *Cyprian's Epiſtles* to be *Canonical*, but I judge of them according to thoſe which are ſuch *indeed*: Whatever therein agreeth with the Authority of *Divine Scriptures*, to his *honour* I do *applaud*; but whatever agreeth not, with his *leave* I do *reject*.

Aug. contra Creſcon. l. 2. c. 31.

'Tis evident by this Expreſſion, that although St. *Cyprian* were indeed, what *Nazianzene* thought fit to ſtyle him, Μέγα εἰκυμένης ἁπάσης ὄνομα, the great *Name* of the whole world; though he were Μέγας τῆς ἀληθείας Ἀγωνιστής, the great *Champion* of the *Truth*; yet it was St. *Auſtine's* Judgment, that ſometimes he dropped from his Pen ſome things that did not well conſiſt with the written Word of God.

Gregor. Naz. in Orat. 18.

The Scriptures tell us that there is *One Baptiſm*: accordingly the Council of *Carthage* thus defined, τὸ ὀφεῖλον ἅπαξ δίδοσθαι ἐπαναληφθῆναι οὐ ἔξεστ· and again, μὴ ἐξεῖναι γίνεσθαι ἀναβαπτίσεις, Baptiſm ought not to be adminiſtred the *ſecond* time, no not to *Hereticks*; ſo *Arſenius*, Οὐ δεῖ ἀναβαπτίζειν τὰς παρὰ τῶν Αἱρετικῶν βαπτιζομένας, Perſons baptized by *Hereticks* muſt not be baptized *again*. Such was the Judgment of *Fathers* and *Councils*; and yet St. *Cyprian* was of his mind who ſaid, Δός μοι λοῦτρον λύτρον· If Baptiſm be at *firſt* adminiſtred by ſuch *Hereticks* as deny the great Articles of the Chriſtian Faith, as they

Concil. Carthag. Can.

Arſen. Synopſis Can. 38.

Gregor. Naz. in Orat. 24.

they in *Nazianzene* did the Divinity of the Holy Ghoſt, then give me a *ſecond* Waſhing. And although *Bellarmine* tell us, that St. *Auſtine* excuſeth *Cyprian* from being an *Heretick*; yet ſure we are he did not excuſe him from being in an *Errour*: for thus he ſaith, *Cyprianum aliter ſenſiſſe de Baptiſmo quàm Forma & Conſuetudo habet Eccleſiæ, in ſuis & in Concilii literis invenitur*, That *Cyprian* did not think of Baptiſm as the *Church* doth, 'tis clear both from the *Council*'s *Letters* and his *own* too. *Bellarm.* de Conc. l. 2. c. 3. *Aug.* ad Vincent. Ep. 48.

And if St. *Cyprian* might erre about *Baptiſm*, why not about the *Euchariſt* too, when he ſaith, *Debet Aqua Vino miſceri, Water muſt be mingled with the Sacramental Wine?* If *Cyprian* were miſtaken about the *Government* of the *Church*, when he ſaid, *Ipſa plebs maximè habet poteſtatem vel eligendi dignos Sacerdotes, vel indignos recuſandi*, The very common *people* have the *chief* Power to *chuſe* good Biſhops, or *refuſe* bad ones; why might he not be miſtaken about the *Ceremonies* of *Baptiſm*, when he ſaid, *Ungi neceſſe eſt eum qui Baptizatus ſit*, &c. 'Tis neceſſary that every perſon who is *Baptized* ſhould be *Anointed* too? If St. *Cyprian* might be, and certainly was, in an Errour in *one* caſe; what ſecurity have we but that he may be miſtaken in ſome *other* matters too? We can never admit all the Doctrines and Uſages received in the *Roman* Church to be of *Apoſtolicall* Authority, though countenanced by St. *Cyprian*'s Teſtimony, except we ſhall firſt forget, that even *Donatus* and his Followers did ſhelter themſelves and their erroneous Opinions under the *name* and *Patronage* of the ſame St. *Cyprian* too. *Cyprian.* Ep. 68. *Cyprian.* Ep. 12.

And truly, we cannot wonder that *Clemens*

Alexandrinus, *Origen*, *Tertullian*, *Cyprian*, and other good men before and after them, were overſeen in ſome Particulars, ſince, out of that great Reſpect and deſerved *Veneration* which they had for the *Apoſtles* themſelves and their immediate *Succeſſours*, they became too prone, without any ſtrict Examination, to give credit to ſuch *Traditions* which were either delivered to them by *word* of *mouth*, or contained in any ſuch *Writings* as bore the *Apoſtles names*, or were pretended to be derived from *Apoſtolical* men.

That there were ſuch *forged Writings* ſent abroad into the world, and that very *early* too, ſeveral Authours have informed us. Thus St. *Auſtine*, *Non defuerunt qui ſub Apoſtolorum nominibus multa conſingerent*, &c. Some there were who *forged* many things in the *Apoſtles names*: ſo he. And in that Edition of the *Septuagint* printed at *Baſil* by *John Hervagius* I find the Lives of the Evangeliſts and Apoſtles, written by *Sophronius*, prefixed before their reſpective Goſpels and Epiſtles; where, in the Life of St. *Peter*, there is mention made of ſeveral *Writings* wherein St. *Peter* was concerned, either as the *Author*, or at leaſt as the *Subject* matter of them; and thus they are named: Πρῶτον ἐπιγέγραπται Πράξεις αὐτῦ, δεύτερον Εὐαγγέλιον, τρίτον Κήρυγμα, τέταρτον Ἀποκάλυψις, πέμπτον Κρίσις. The firſt was inſcribed The *Acts* of St. *Peter*, the ſecond was named The *Goſpel* of St. *Peter*, &c. Of all theſe the Writer of his Life paſſeth this Judgment, Ὡς Ἀπόκρυφα ὄντα ἀποδοκιμάζεται, They are all rejected as *Apocryphal* Writings. And yet in the Life of St. *James* there is mention of a Book entitled Εὐαγγέλιον κατ' Ἑβραίους. The *Goſpel* according

Aug. ad Vincent. Ep. 48.

ding to the *Hebrews*; a Book, saith the Authour, ᾧ καὶ Ὠριγένης πολλάκις κέχρηται, which *Origen* often used. And certainly, if *Origen* and other Fathers did reade and believe such *Apocryphal* books, we cannot wonder that they fell into some absurd Opinions, and have transmitted to posterity such *fond Traditions* as are far from being *Apostolicall.*

I remember St. *Paul* tells us, that *Christ* after his Resurrection *was seen of James*; and upon what occasion *Christ* was pleased to appear singly to St. *James* alone, that forenamed *counterfeit Gospel* thus informs us: Ὤμοσε γὰρ Ἰάκωβος μὴ γεύσασθαι ἄρτου ἐξ ἐκείνης τῆς ὥρας ἀφ' ἧς ἔπιεν τὸ ποτήριον ὁ Κύριος, ἕως ἴδῃ αὐτὸν ἀνασάντα ἐκ νεκρῶν. St. *James* had sworn that he would not taste one morsel of Bread from that hour wherein *Christ* died, till he should see him risen from the dead again. Upon this score, saith the Authour of that Book, *Christ* appeared to him, καὶ λαβὼν ἄρτον, εὐχαριστήσας ἔκλασε, καὶ δεδωκὼς Ἰακώβῳ τῷ δικαίῳ λέγει αὐτῷ, Ἀδελφέ μου, ἔσθιε τὸν ἄρτον σου, ἠγέρθη γὰρ ὁ Υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐκ νεκρῶν· and taking bread, and having given thanks, he brake it; and giving it to St. *James* the Just, said, My brother, eat thy bread, for the Son of man is risen from the dead, &c.

So inconsistent is this Tradition, in its several Circumstances, with the written Word, that *Estius* himself styles it *Narrationem fabulosam*, a *fabulous Narration*; and *Lorinus* confesseth, *Hanc Historiam non admittit Augustinus*, St. *Austine* doth not admit this Story: and yet *Estius* observes, that St. *Hierom* doth use some other Passages of that false Gospel, wherein this *Tale* is recorded.

Est. in 1 Cor. 15. 7.

Lor. in Act. 1. 13.

And what need I mention thoſe other *counterfeit Goſpels* of St. *Thomas*, St. *Bartholomew*, and *Nicodemus*? What need I mention the *forged Acts* of St. *Andrew*? and that pretended Epiſtle of St. *Paul* to the *Laodiceans*, the true one (if yet there were ever any ſuch) being acknowledged by *Bellarmine* to be loſt? What ſhould I mention that *Protevangelium* fathered upon St. *James*, and yet full of ſuch Traditions as are no way reconcilable with *Chriſt* and his Apoſtles? St. *Luke* tells us, Πολλοὶ ἐπεχείρησαν, *Many have taken in hand to ſet forth in order a declaration of thoſe things*, &c. *Theophylact* here puts the Queſtion, Τίνες ἦσαν οἱ πολλοί; Who were theſe *many* that thus undertook to write the Goſpel? He anſwers, οἱ ψευδαπόστολοι, they were *falſe Apoſtles*: and he tells us farther, Πολλοὶ συνέγραψαν Εὐαγγέλια ὕστερον· Οἷον ἔστι τὸ κατ' Αἰγυπτίους, καὶ τὸ ἐπιγραφόμενον τῶν Δώδεκα· Many, even then, χωρὶς θείας χάριτος, without the *Grace* and *Spirit* of *God*, wrote ſeveral counterfeit Goſpels; as the Goſpel according to the *Egyptians*, the Goſpel of the *Twelve*, &c.

And certainly, albeit thoſe good men, the Fathers of the Church, out of too much *Credulity* and *Veneration* ſhewed towards their Predeceſſours, were pleaſed to give ſo much Credit to thoſe *ſpurious* Writings, which deſerved rather to be *expunged* then *believed*, as to tranſcribe ſomething of them into their own Works, and thereby tranſmit them to Poſterity: yet all ſuch *Paſſages*, derived from uncertain and deſervedly-ſuſpected Authours, can be no more authentick, nor claim any greater Authority, then the *Originals* from which they were borrowed.

And

And as for ſome other things which the Fathers wrote upon their *own* Judgments, delivering the ſenſe of their own Underſtandings, they have ſufficiently evidenced themſelves to be too *fallible*, as our Adverſaries themſelves do acknowledge. It is true, where the Fathers do but ſeem to countenance the fond and ſuperſtitious Doctrines of the *Roman* Church, if there be found any Paſſage in them that can poſſibly be pretended to favour that abſurd and incredible Aſſertion of *Tranſubſtantiation*, or thoſe advantageous Doctrines of *Purgatory*, *Indulgencies*, *auricular Confeſſion*, or the like; every ſuch Paſſage, how *ambiguous* ſoever, muſt paſs for a *certain Truth*, as if it proceeded *ex Tripode*, even from an *Oracle*. But in common caſes, and eſpecially in thoſe *Controverſies* wherein the Fathers contradict the *Opinions* and *Practices* of that Church, they are eſteemed no more then other men; and, how *clear* and plain ſoever their Expreſſions are, they are counted *doubtful* and fallible enough. Thus *Lorinus*, *Gentiles ignorantiâ Linguæ Hebrææ lapſi ſunt, ac nonnulli etiam Patres*; The *Gentiles*, being ignorant of the *Hebrew* Tongue, did erre, and ſo did ſome of the *Fathers* too. And in the ſame place he ſpeaks thus of *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Longè abeſt à vero quod arbitratur Clemens Alexandrinus*, The *Opinion* of this *Clemens* is far from being a *Truth*. And as for St. *Baſil*, he giveth us this *Caution* too, *Tanti Patris Doctrina cum Cautione intelligenda eſt*, The *Doctrine* of ſo great a Father muſt be underſtood with *Caution*. And why, pray, with ſo much Caution? certainly, ſome nice and tender Point lieth at ſtake; and that was this, *Nè juſtiſſimis Pontificum Decre-*

Lorin. in Act. 1. 13.

Decretis adverſetur, Leſt St. *Baſil* ſhould perhaps contradict the *Pope*. Well, ſince 'tis granted on all ſides, that the very beſt of the Fathers were ſubject to miſtakes; we have reaſon to believe, that they might more probably erre in the caſe of *Traditions* ſooner then in any other Point whatever: and upon that ſcore, ſuch *Traditions* as have no Countenance from the *written* Word, nor the general *Teſtimony* of *Antiquity*, we cannot receive as *Apoſtolicall*, though ſuch and ſuch a *particular Father* may ſeem to recommend them. But,

2. The Second Reaſon why we cannot comply with every thing which we find recorded in the Works of *ſuch* and *ſuch* ancient Fathers is, Becauſe the *Writings* of theſe Fathers have been miſerably *abuſed*, corrupted, falſified, or forged.

Such Abuſes have the moſt early Fathers met with. So *Ignatius*, who was, as *Euſebius* tells us, *Euſeb.* Hiſt. l. 3. c. 36. παρὰ πλείστοις διαβόητος, τῆς καθ' Ἀντιόχειαν Πέτρου διαδοχῆς δεύτερος τὸν Ἐπισκοπὴν κεκληρωμένος, amongſt moſt men renowned, the *ſecond Biſhop* of *Antioch*, being the immediate *Succeſſour* of St. *Peter*. But though this excellent Perſon were indeed ſo *ancient*, that his gray hairs might juſtly challenge a Veneration; yet have they not ſecured him from ſeveral groſs and foul Affronts. We find ſome *Baſtards* laid even at this *old* man's door; Ἐπιστολὰς ψευδεπιγράφους καὶ ἀποβολιμαίους, ſuppoſititious and ſpurious Epiſtles, πρὸς Μαρίαν, πρὸς τοὺς ἐν Ταρσῷ, &c. aſcribed to *Ignatius*, though none of *his*. And as for thoſe Epiſtles, collected by *Polycarp*, and mentioned by *Euſebius*, which, notwithſtanding all the Cavils of *Blondel*, *Walo*, and other Antiepiſcopal perſons, our learned

ned *Pearſon* and *Hammond* (ὁ Μαγαλῆτης) have ſufficiently vindicated and proved to be *his*; we find even theſe, as worthy *Iſaac Voſſius* well expreſſeth it, *ità interpolatas, ut plurimùm Ignatium in hoc Ignatio fruſtrà quæras*, ſo interlarded and ſtuffed with ſuch numerous Inſertions, that in this *new Ignatius* the *old* one can ſcarce be found.

And as for *Origen*, though it is generally granted that his Writings, even as they dropped from his own Quill, are many times to blame; yet 'tis eaſily believed that ſome *Corrupters* and Falſifiers of his Works have made them *worſe*. Thus *Daniel Huetius*, who hath given the world a ſolemn account of *Origen*'s Life and Opinions, doth aſſure us: *Cùm ab Hæreticis violata eſſe conſtaret Origeniana volumina*, &c. Since it was evident that *Origen*'s Books were *abuſed* by Hereticks, &c. And doth not *Valeſius* tell us, *Clementis Romani libros qui* Περιοδοι Πετρου *inſcribebantur ab Ebionæis corruptos fuiſſe atque falſatos*, that the Books of *Clemens Romanus* named The *Journals of Peter* were *corrupted* and falſified by the *Ebionites*?

Dan. Huet. in Prol. l. 2. Origen. c. 2.

Valeſ. in Euſeb. Hiſt. l. 3. c. 38.

And this our Adverſaries of *Rome* do not deny, when-ever it makes for their *Advantage* to *confeſs* it. *Cornelius à Lapide*, a learned Jeſuit, finding that St. *Hierom*'s Epiſtle to *Damaſus* made againſt him, flieth to this Refuge, *Epiſtola Hieronymi ad Damaſum non videtur eſſe Hieronymi, ſed conficta*, The Epiſtle of *Hierom* to *Damaſus* ſeems not to be really *his*, but a meer counterfeit.

Well; ſure we are, there are no perſons to be named throughout the world that have ſhewed themſelves, ſhall I ſay more *ingenious*, or more *impudent*? in imitating their Forefathers *Hands*,

and counterfeiting their *Voices*, and that to very ill Purpoſes too, then the men that we have now to deal with. 'Tis the great Shame of the *Roman* Church, and ſuch a Blemiſh as is not to be wiped off for ever, that they put unſavoury words into their *Fathers* mouths, and cite the *Dead* to bear Teſtimony to thoſe *Follies* and Falſhoods which, when *alive*, they would have abhorred with juſt Indignation and Zeal.

'Tis well obſerved and unanſwerably proved by an eminent Divine of our own Church, that the *Romaniſts* have uſed ſeveral Tricks to *corrupt* the Fathers, and make them ſpeak even as they themſelves would have them. For ſometimes they inſert illegitimate and *baſtard Treatiſes* into the Fathers Works, hoping that theſe *ſpurious Brats* will paſs for their *lawful Children*, becauſe found within their *doors*. Sometimes again they do *falſifie* the known and undoubted Writings of ancient Authours, by *adding* one thing, *detracting* a ſecond, and *changing* a third. Sometimes alſo they do cite and alleage ſuch and ſuch Paſſages out of ſuch and ſuch Fathers, ſo miſerably *wreſted* from the Senſe of the Authour, that they offer Violence and commit a ſacrilegious *Rape* even upon the *Dead*.

The *Purging* of the *Fathers* by ſuppreſſing, razing and blotting out ſuch and ſuch Paſſages which do not pleaſe them, the *Roman Church* doth own. Thus they tell us concerning the *Venetian Edition* of St. *Auſtine*, *Curavimus removeri illa omnia quæ fidelium mentes Hæreticâ pravitate poſſent inficere, aut à Catholica Orthodoxa fide deviare :* We have taken care for the removal out of St. *Auſtine* all thoſe

In Præf. Ind. lib. prohib.

those Passages of his which might infect the minds of the faithful with Heretical Pravity, or make them turn aside from the Catholick Orthodox Faith. We are also told in the Preface to the *Paris Edition* of St. *Austine*, *Ex sanctissimo Concilii Tridentini Decreto veterum Patrum Codices expurgandi*, By the most holy Decree of the Council of *Trent* the Books of the ancient *Fathers* are to be purged. And for so doing doth *Sixtus Senensis* thus commend *Pius* the Fifth: *Expurgari & emaculari curâsti omnium Catholicorum Scriptorum, præcipuè veterum Patrum, scripta*; Thou hast caused the Works of all *Catholick Writers*, but chiefly those of the ancient *Fathers*, to be *purged* and made clean from blots and stains of Errours; that is, from every thing that *contradicts* the Superstitions of the *Roman* Church.

Sixt. Sen. Epist. ad Pium quintum.

But if it were a thing indeed so commendable to *purge* the Fathers, yet is it a thing praise-worthy to *falsifie* and *forge* them too? St. *Chrysostom* left upon record an Expression which the *Roman* Church doth no way like, and that was this; *In times of Heresie there is no means to find out the Truth, save onely the reading of the Scriptures.* *Bellarmine* confesseth, *Totus hic locus è quibusdam codicibus nuper emendatis sublatus est*; This whole Passage is left out of some Editions newly set forth and corrected. But how comes St. *Chrysostom* thus to deserve the *Spunge*? The *Cardinal* gives this Reason, *Hoc Testimonium non est Chrysostomi*, This Testimony is not *Chrysostom*'s: but whose then? *Ab Arrianis locus hic insertus*, This place was inserted into St. *Chrysostom*'s Works by the *Arrians*, and therefore deserved rather to be *expunged* then *believed*.

Chrys. Hom. 49. in Matt.

We ſee what liberty the *Romaniſts* take to themſelves to *raze* and blot out ſuch and ſuch Paſſages of the Fathers which make againſt them, upon a groundleſs pretence that thoſe Paſſages were *inſerted* by ſome *Heretick* or other: and can they then juſtly complain of us, if we are not willing to credit ſome Expreſſions of ancient Authours, upon which they ground thoſe *Doctrines* and *Practices* of theirs which we reject, ſince we have too much reaſon to believe that thoſe Expreſſions are *corrupted*, falſified, and forged, and that by ſome of their *own Church?*

That the *Roman Catholicks* have indeed miſerably *corrupted* the ancient Writers in their Editions, we are ſufficiently convinced by the Teſtimony of our learned Doctour *Featly*, who hath traced them through the ſeveral Ages of the Church, and diſcovered to the world this unworthy dealing of theirs, by giving us *particular Inſtances*, and naming the *Treatiſes* and *Expreſſions* of ſeveral Fathers, which *their* Adverſaries as well as *ours* have *abuſed*, perverted, and corrupted thus or thus. That of *Ignatius* is one, who beſpeaks Virgins thus; Ἐν εὐχαῖς, &c. In your *Prayers* ſet *Chriſt* before your eyes and his Father, &c. To evacuate this great and ancient Teſtimony againſt the *Invocation* of *Saints* and *Angels*, a late *Popiſh* Edition printed at *Lyons* reads it thus, Ἐν ψυχαῖς, In your *Souls* ſet *Chriſt* before your eyes, &c. Again, thoſe words of our Bleſſed Saviour, *The fleſh profiteth nothing*, *Tertullian* thus expounds, *Caro nihil prodeſt, ad vivificandum ſcilicet*, The fleſh profiteth nothing, that is, to quicken; ſo ſaith the true *Tertullian*: but a former

Featly's defence of *Via Tuta.*

Ignat. Epiſt. ad Philadelph.

Tertul. de Reſur. c. 37.

mer *Edition* of theirs, ſet forth at *Paris*, (though mended ſince by *Rigaltius*) contrary to the meaning of *Chriſt* and *Tertullian* too, reads it thus, *Caro nihil prodeſt, ſed ad vivificandum*, The fleſh profiteth nothing, ſave *onely* to quicken. Once more: our learned Authour mentions thoſe words of St. *Cyprian* too, *Poſt guſtatam Euchariſtiam*, After the *eating* of the Euchariſt; which the *Popiſh* Edition at *Paris*, to countenance a Ceremony of theirs, changeth thus, *Poſt geſtatam Euchariſtiam*, After the *Circumgeſtation* of the Euchariſt. Nor can this Change be imputed to the miſtake of the *Preſſe*, becauſe their Authours own and endeavour to juſtifie the Alteration.

Theſe and a great many more Corruptions, Forgeries and Falſifications of the ancient Fathers are reckoned up in that learned Treatiſe, which give us fair warning not to believe every Teſtimony which our Adverſaries pretend to produce out of ſuch and ſuch old Writers, ſet forth by themſelves for the juſtification of thoſe Traditions for which they can bring no good warrant from the written Word of God. For, ſince 'tis undeniable that they have notoriouſly abuſed the Records of Antiquity by ſuppreſſing, changing, and inſerting, *what* and *where* they pleaſed; we have abundant cauſe to believe, that theſe Alterations are made in thoſe *very places* which they commonly *cite* in their own defence; they being too wiſe to *forge* any *counterfeit Deeds*, and *ſuborn* any other *falſe Witneſſes*, then ſuch as are deſigned to ſpeak for their Advantage. But,

IV. The Champions of the *Roman* Church endeavour to juſtifie their Traditions by the Teſti-

mony and Authority of ſuch and ſuch *Councils*. To which we have two things to reply.

1. We cannot imagine but that whole Councils may *erre* in their Judgments, and be miſtaken in their *Canons*, Decrees and Conſtitutions.

That no *meer* man, ſave onely the *Prophets*, *Evangeliſts* and *Apoſtles*, ever was Infallible, is acknowledged by ſome learned perſons even of the *Roman* Church. If *Cajetane* were not perfectly of this mind, what means that Expreſſion of his, *Solis Sacræ Scripturæ Authoribus reſervata eſt hæc Authoritas, ut ideo ſic credamus eſſe, quia Ipſi ſic ſcripſerunt?* That we ſhould certainly believe things to be thus and thus, barely becauſe 'tis ſo written by ſuch and ſuch, is a *Privilege* peculiar to the *Pen-men* of *Holy Writ* alone. Surely then that Aſſertion of *Gratian*, mentioned by *Bellarmine*, ſeems ſomewhat ſawcy, *Epiſtolas Pontificum Decretales numerari debere inter Scripturas Canonicas*, The Pope's *Decretal Epiſtles* ought to be reckoned amongſt the *Canonical Scriptures*. And methinks the *Cardinal* himſelf ſeems ſomewhat confident, when he ſpeaks thus indifferently of *Scriptures* and *Councils*, *Utraque ſunt infallibilis Veritatis, & æquè certa*, They are *both* of *infallible* Truth, and *equally* certain. But if Cardinal *Cajetane* were in the right; if all thoſe Biſhops and Doctours of whom Councils have conſiſted were but men, ſubject to Miſtakes and Errours in their own particular perſons; how the whole *collective* Body of any Synod ſhould, in the reſult, prove infallible, the Church of *Rome* will never be able to ſhew by any ſuch clear Evidence as may ſatisfie a ſober and impartial man.

Cajetan. in Præf. Pentat.

Bellar. de Concil. l. 2. c. 12.

We

We do not deny but that there is much of Truth in that Assertion of St. *Austine*, *Conciliorum in Ecclesia saluberrima est Authoritas*, The Authority of Councils is of great Advantage to the Church of God: we do with all thankfulness to Heaven acknowledge and own the *Four first* General Councils; that of *Nice*, which vindicated the Divinity of *Christ* against *Arrius*; that of *Constantinople*, which asserted the Divinity of the Holy Ghost against *Macedonius*; that of *Ephesus*, which maintained the Unity of *Christ*'s Person against *Nestorius*; and that of *Chalcedon*, which asserted the double Nature of *Christ* against *Eutyches*. So venerable is the Authority of these Four Councils, that we do not quarrel with that high Expression of that good Emperour *Justinian*, if rightly understood, Τῶν Ἁγίων τεσσάρων Συνόδων τὰ δόγματα καθάπερ τὰς Θείας γραφὰς δεχόμεθα, καὶ τοὺς Κανόνας ὡς Νόμους φυλάττομεν· We receive the Doctrines of these *Four* holy *Councils* even *as* (not in *equality*, but *similitude*) the Holy *Scriptures*, and observe their *Canons* as so many *Laws*. Accordingly *Evagrius* tells us, Ὑποτέθεικε καὶ τέσσαρας Συνόδους ἐπὶ τῶν Ἐκκλησιῶν κηρύττεσθαι, The Emperour commanded that the Decrees of these Four Councils should be read *publickly* in the *Churches*.

Aug. ad Januar. Ep. 118.

Justinian. Nov. 131.

But although these Councils deserved this great Respect, as keeping close to the Word of God; yet other Councils, which the *Roman* Church makes much of, did not so. That Councils may possibly erre, and recede from Scripture-Rules, St. *Hierom* declared his Judgment in that Expression of his, cited by *Chemnitius*, *Spiritûs Sancti Doctrina est, quæ Canonicis literis prodita est*; *contra*

Chemnit. de Sac. Script. p. 3.

contra quam ſiquid ſtatuant Concilia, nefas duco: That is the ſure Doctrine of the Holy Ghoſt, which is delivered in the *Canonical* Writings; againſt which if *Councils* determine this or that, I count it wicked. And did not their famous Council of *Conſtance* (when three Popes were upon the ſtage at once; *John* ſet up by the *Italians*, *Gregory* by the *French*, and *Benedict* by the *Spaniards*) define contrary to the Word of God, (not to mention the caſe of *John Huſſe* and *Jerom* of *Prague*) when they forbad all Prieſts, under the Penalty of Excommunication, to adminiſter the Euchariſt in *both* Kinds to the *Laiety*? And was not this Canon ſo contrary to the *general Cuſtom* of *Antiquity*, that we muſt either grant the Primitive *Church* to have been miſtaken in their *old* univerſal Practices, or elſe this *Council* to have been erroneous in this *new* Conſtitution?

Indeed, the *Roman* Church doth very well *approve* the Council of *Conſtance* in their *Sacrilegious Decree* which robs the People of half the Sacrament: but I remember the *Roman* Church doth alſo *condemn* the ſelf-ſame *Council* for that Definition of theirs whereby they robbed the *Pope* of more then half his Authority. For when the Council of *Conſtance* had paſſed their Judgment, and declared that the Authority of *Councils* is ſuperiour to that of *Popes*; and when the Council of *Baſil* had ratified and ſolemnly confirmed the ſame Aſſertion; in oppoſition to theſe two Councils, (the laſt not then diſſolved) *Engenius* the Fourth calleth a Council at *Florence*, which by a *contrary Vote* ſets the *Pope* above the *Council*.

So then, here is *Council* againſt *Council*, *Canon* againſt

againſt *Canon*, directly contradicting one another in the ſelf-*ſame* matter: and ſince 'tis ſo, we have all reaſon to conclude, either that *ſome* of theſe Councils were in an *Errour*; or elſe that *all Logicians* are certainly ſo, who tell us, that two contrary Propoſitions, though poſſibly both may be *falſe*, yet both can never be *true* together.

But the truth is, 'tis obſerved that there was ſuch *Ambition*, ſuch *Animoſities* and *Factions* diſcovered in ſeveral Councils that were convened in ſeveral Centuries, that *Gregory Nazianzene*, had he lived in later Ages, might have had far more juſt occaſion for thoſe Complaints of his, Μηδεμιᾶς συνόδου τέλος εἶδον χρηστὸν, μηδὲ λύσιν κακῶν ἐσχηκυίας μᾶλλον ἢ προσθήκην· I never ſaw an happy *Iſſue* of any *one Synod* whatſoever, which did not rather *augment* then *remedy* Evils. Upon which ſcore he thus reſolves, Ἔγωγε μὲν οὖν, εἰ δεῖ τἀληθῆ γεγράφειν, ὥστε πάντα σύλλογον φεύγειν Ἐπισκόπων· If I may but write the Truth, my purpoſe is to decline all Conventions of Biſhops whatſoever. But what is his Reaſon? 'Tis clear enough, that this excellent Perſon did highly eſteem the Council of *Nice*; for he doth not onely call it Σύνοδον ἁγίαν, an *Holy Council*, but he alſo tells us that thoſe three hundred and eighteen Biſhops were ſuch ὃς τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ Ἅγιον εἰς ἓν ἤγαγεν, whom the *Holy Ghoſt* had brought together: and as for the Council of *Conſtantinople*, the Argument of his Epiſtle to *Procopius* tells us, that he himſelf was *magna Concilii pars*, a very great man in it: and if ſo, what occaſion had he to write ſuch unkind things of *Councils*? Himſelf informs us, Αἱ φιλονεικίαι καὶ φιλαρχίαι καὶ λόγου κρείττονες, There was ſo much *Diſſenſion* and ſuch *Ambition* in them as was beyond expreſſion. *Greg. Naz.* ad Procop. Ep. 42.

And certainly, if ſuch an eminent Perſon as *Gregory Nazianzene*, who was deſervedly ſtyled ὁ Θεολόγος, the Great *Theologue* or Divine of that Age, found cauſe enough to blame ſome *early* Councils of thoſe Times; had he lived to ſee the *Decrees* and *Canons* eſtabliſhed by the ſeveral *Factions* of later Conventions, he would never have thought them, as the *Romaniſts* contend, to be Infallible. True it is, St. *Auſtine* tells us, *Concilia poſteriora prioribus apud Poſteros præponuntur*, Men that live in later times are apt to prefer *later* Councils before thoſe that are more *ancient*: but what reaſon is there for it? That of *Juſtellus* is certainly true concerning theſe later Councils, *Non ſunt ejuſdem fidei & dignitatis cum prioribus illis Quatuor Oecumenicis*, &c. They are not of the ſame *Credit*, Faith and Honour with the *Four* firſt General Councils. And if ſo, ſince there are ſome juſt grounds of *Suſpicions* and Jealouſies concerning their Determinations, who ſhall perſwade us that they are Infallible? But,

Aug. l. 2. de Bapt. c. 3.

Juſtellus in præfat. Can. Eccleſiæ Africanæ.

2. What if it appear that *Councils* are not onely *fallible*, but that they have been moſt miſerably *corrupted* and *forged* too? What ſure warrant have we for ſuch and ſuch Practices, not recommended in Sacred Writ, from the Authority of Councils, when ſuch and ſuch Conſtitutions, Decrees and Canons have been aſcribed to ſuch and ſuch Councils, which indeed were never theirs?

We reade that *Zoſimus*, Biſhop of *Rome*, ſent his Legats to the ſixth Council of *Carthage*, with Inſtructions to maintain the *Primacy* of the *Roman* Biſhop as the onely *Judge* in caſes of Controverſies

verſies and *Appeals*; and for that Prerogative of his they pretended a *Canon* of the firſt *Nicene* Council: which was indeed a very fair Plea, had it been true, becauſe the Acts of that Council were not onely *confirmed* by the *Emperour*, but *received* by the *univerſal Church*. What particular Canon of the *Nicene* Council was pleaded for the Primacy of the *Roman* Biſhop, *Bellarmine* tells us. *Habemus Nicænum Concilium, & illum ipſum ſextum Canonem*, &c. We have on our ſide the *Nicene* Council, and that very *ſixth* Canon, &c. The *Canon* is this, Τὰ ἀρχαῖα ἔθη κρατείτω τὰ ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ καὶ Λιβύῃ καὶ Πενταπόλει, ὥστε τὸν ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ Ἐπίσκοπον πάντων τούτων ἔχειν τὴν ἐξουσίαν· ἐπειδὴ καὶ τῷ ἐν τῇ Ῥώμῃ Ἐπισκόπῳ τοῦτο συνήθης ἐστιν. Ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ κατὰ τὴν Ἀντόχειαν καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἄλλαις Ἐπαρχίαις, τὰ πρεσβεῖα σώζεσθαι ταῖς Ἐκκλησίαις. The Deſign of this Canon was onely this, that the *Biſhops* of *Alexandria* and *Antioch* and all other *Metropolitans* ſhould ſtill govern the Churches within their reſpective Provinces, as the *Biſhop* of *Rome* was wont to govern thoſe within his.

Theſe being the expreſs words and this being the undoubted Senſe of the Canon, the Council of *Carthage* anſwered *Fauſtinus*, *Philippus* and *Aſellus*, who were the Pope's Legates, that although they had ſtrictly ſearched *all Regiſters*, and examined the moſt *authentick Copies* of the Acts of the *Nicene* Council, which they had received from *Cyril* Biſhop of *Alexandria* and *Atticus* Biſhop of *Conſtantinople*, yet they could find nothing done by that Council to eſtabliſh or countenance the *Primacy* of the *Roman* Biſhop, nor that the Biſhops of *Africa* were obliged by any Canon of the *Nicene* Council to *appeal* and be ſubject to the See of *Rome*.

But the *Primacy* of the Pope being a Point of great Concern to the *Roman* Church, and there being nothing more likely to eſtabliſh it then the *Authority* of the *Nicene* Council, which is received by the univerſal Church; what greater Service could any man doe for the Biſhop of *Rome*, then to prove his univerſal *Preeminence* over all other Biſhops and Churches by ſome Act of *that* famous *Council*, which no Church gainſayeth? This is that which *Bellarmine* attempts: and becauſe he cannot doe it convincingly by the Canon, as it is vulgarly read and expreſſed in the uſual and publick Editions; he produceth a *private Copy*, and tells us, that the *Canon*, as it is commonly read, is *imperfect*, and ought thus to begin, *Eccleſia Romana ſemper habuit Primatum: Mos autem perduret*, &c. *The Roman Church hath always had the Primacy*, &c.

One would think it ſtrange that *Bellarmine* ſhould adventure to make ſuch an *Addition* to the Canon of ſo known and *famous* a *Council*: but, to juſtifie himſelf, he tells us, that this Canon was anciently ſo read; and that about a thouſand years ago it was thus tranſlated out of the *Greek* Copies into *Latine* by a certain Abbot, named *Dionyſius*; and that ſuch a Copy was found in the *Roman Library*; and that it was ſo read by *Paſchaſianus*, the Legat of Pope *Leo*, in the Council of *Chalcedon*, and there approved.

But in deſperate caſes the old Rule muſt be obſerved, *Scelere tutandum eſt Scelus*, One Lie muſt be juſtified by another. For 'tis not eaſie to believe, that the onely *true* Copy of the Acts of the *Nicene* Council, and that in a *Latine* Tranſlation too,

too, ſhould be preſerved at *Rome*: nor is it eaſie to imagine, that if there had been ſuch an *authentick* Copy of that famous Council lodged at *Rome*, it would have been permitted ſo long to have lain in the dark, and never have been produced til the Council of *Chalcedon*; eſpecially ſince the *Intereſt* of the *Roman* Biſhop required the Production thereof to prove the ſame Prerogative above fifty years ſooner. For will any man believe that thoſe *Roman* Biſhops, *Zoſimus* and his Succeſſour *Boniface*, who claimed this Primacy from the ſixth *Council* of *Carthage*, would have been ſo far wanting to themſelves, as not to have produced ſuch an *authentick* Copy, which, if clearly made out, would have *ſatisfied* the *Council*, *ended* the *Controverſie*, and *eſtabliſhed* the *Primacy* of *Rome* by a Law?

True it is, *Fauſtinus*, the Pope's Legate, produced in that Council his *Commonitorium* which he had from *Rome*, pretending the Authority of the *Nicene* Fathers for the *Primacy* of the Pope, and particularly in matters of *Appeal*: but how little theſe Pretences were liked by the Council, we may eaſily gueſs by that Anſwer which was returned by *Alipius*, who was a great man there, Ἐμὲ κινεῖ, ὅτι ἐν τῷ ἐπισκήπτειν ἡμᾶς τοῖς Γραικικοῖς ἴσως ταύτης τῆς ἐν Νικαίᾳ συνόδου, ταῦτα ἐκεῖ, ἐκ οἵδα ποίῳ λόγῳ, ἐδαμῶς εὕρομεν· It troubleth me, that though we have examined the *Greek Copies* of the *Nicene* Council, yet (how it comes to paſs I cannot tell) we can by *no* means find any ſuch thing as the *Roman* Biſhop *pretends* and claims. And ſo much did they certifie Pope *Boniface* himſelf in their Synodical Letter, Πλείστοις ἐντυγχάνοντες βιβλίοις, εἰς οὐδὲν βιβλίον Γραι-

κὸν ταῦτα εὑρεῖν ἠδυνήθημεν· Having many *Greek* Copies before us, we could not find what was intimated and demanded from *Rome*, no not so much as in any *one*.

However, that they might satisfie themselves and the Bishop of *Rome* too so much the better, they thought fit to dispatch away their Letters to *Cyril* Bishop of *Alexandria*, and *Atticus* Bishop of *Constantinople*, desiring them to send over what *Copies* and *Registers* they had of the *Nicene* Council: who accordingly did so. For thus *Cyril* tells them, Ἀναγκαῖον ἡγησάμην ἀποστεῖλαι τὰ πιστότατα ἴσα τὰ τῆς ἁγιωτάτης συνόδου τῆς ἐν τῇ Νικαέων πόλει ἐχόμενα. And thus *Atticus* too, Καθὼς οἱ ἐν Νικαίᾳ ἀπὸ τῶν πατέρων ὡρίσαντο κανόνες, ἐν ὁλοκλήρῳ, ὡς ἐκελεύσατε, ἀπέσταλα. 'Tis evident, by these Expressions, that these two Bishops sent over to the Council of *Carthage* the *Acts*, Decrees and Canons of the *Nicene* Fathers *entire*, uncorrupted, and unquestionable. And what's the Issue? do any one of *these* Copies agree with that of *Rome*? No; the Council having perused ἀληθεστάτας Ἀπογραφὰς, these true Copies, sent this Message to *Cælestinus*, who was now become Pope, and had made the same Demands with *Zosimus* and *Boniface*, Τοιοῦτό τι ποτὲ οὐκ ἠδυνήθημεν εὑρεῖν, We cannot find any such *Canon* as is pretended, no not in the most *authentick* Copies that we have perused.

But the truth is, that Copy of the *Nicene* Council mentioned by the Pope's Legate to the Council of *Carthage* was, to the shame of the *Roman* See, unworthily and basely *corrupted*; and those words mentioned by *Bellarmine*, *Ecclesia Romana semper habuit Primatum*, were *de novo*, how *politickly* soever, yet *knavishly* enough, added to the

old

old Canon. For 'tis evident that the Council of *Carthage* resolved to alter nothing that had been defined by the *Nicene* Fathers. Σύμπασα ἡ Σύνοδος εἶπεν, Πάντα τὰ ἐν τῇ Νικαέων συνόδῳ ὁρισθέντα πᾶσιν ἡμῖν ἀρέσκουσιν· and again, Τὸ ὁρισθὲν ὑπὸ τῆς ἐν Νικαίᾳ συνόδου παραδραπῆναι ὑπό τινος ἀδίκως δύναται. Which Expressions are enough to convince all reasonable men, that this Council of *Carthage* had no inclination to *change any*, but *confirm all*, the Constitutions of the *Nicene* Fathers: but as to that *Canon* which the Pope's Legate pretended, requiring or allowing the *African* Clergy to *appeal* from their own Bishops to the Bishop of *Rome*, they were so far from *confirming* this, that they established an express *Canon against* it; and thus it runs, Πρεσβύτεροι καὶ Διάκονοι, καὶ οἱ λοιποὶ κατώτεροι οἱ Κληρικοὶ, ἐν αἷς ἔχωσιν αἰτίαις, μὴ ἐκκαλέσωνται εἰς τὰ πέραν τῆς θαλάσσης δικαστήρια· Presbyters, Deacons, and other inferiour Clergy-men, in whatever Causes they have, let them *not appeal* to *any* Tribunal beyond the Sea, *i. e.* as the *Council* expressly words it in their Letter to the Pope, πρὸς τὸν τῆς Ῥωμαίων Ἐκκλησίας Ἐπίσκοπον, let them not appeal to the *Bishop* of *Rome*. This *Canon* did so nettle the *Roman* Bishops, that upon this occasion *Boniface* the Second told *Eulalius* Bishop of *Carthage*, who had now unworthily submitted his Chair to the See of *Rome*, that his Predecessour *Aurelius*, St. *Austine*, and above two hundred more learned and pious Bishops assembled in the Council of *Carthage*, had denied Subjection to the *Roman* Bishop, because they were, as he impudently affirmed, *inspired* and *instigated* by the *Devil*.

But as from this *Determination* of the Council of

of *Carthage* we may conclude that pretended Canon of the *Nicene* Bishops, alleged by *Faustinus* in the Pope's behalf, to be *spurious* and *forged*; so may we reasonably infer as much from the consideration of its *matter*, which is altogether *untrue* and evidently false. For, is it imaginable that so early a Council as that of *Nice* should acknowledge and ratifie the perpetual *Primacy* of the *Roman* Bishop, since 'tis notoriously known, that the *Primacy* of the *Roman* Bishops was first derived from that bloudy Emperour *Phocas*, and procured by the crafty Insinuations of *Boniface* the Third, who, *magna cum contentione*, as *Platina* writes, with much adoe procured, but most willingly assumed to himself, the *Title* of *Universal Bishop*, and *Head* of *all* other *Churches*?

That it was not thus in former Ages, we have the Confession of *Gregory* the Great, who tells us, *Nullus unquam Prædecessorum meorum hoc tam prophano vocabulo uti consuevit*; None of all my Predecessours would ever assume to himself this *profane* Title: and as for himself, he was so far from owning it, that he was the very first Bishop of *Rome* that styled himself *Servus Servorum Dei*, the Servant of the Servants of God. To style himself by this humble Title he took occasion from the *Pride* and *Arrogance* of *John*, called Nesteus, Patriarch of *Constantinople*, which being at that time the *Imperial Seat*, this *John* had took upon him the Title of *Universal* Bishop; whereof *Gregory* thus complains: *O tempora! ô mores! Ecce destructæ urbes, eversa castra*, &c. *& tamen Sacerdotes, qui in pavimento & cinere flentes jacere debuerunt, Vanitatis sibi nomen expetunt, & novis & pro-*

Gregor. M. l. 4. Ep. 36.

Greg. M. l. 4. Ep. 32.

& prophanis vocabulis gloriantur. With this Expreſſion of *Gregory* the Great agreeth that of *Uſpergenſis*; *Rogatu Bonifacii Phocas conſtituit Sedem Romanæ & Apoſtolicæ Eccleſiæ Caput eſſe omnium Eccleſiarum; nam antea Conſtantinopolitana Eccleſia ſe ſcribebat primam Omnium: Phocas*, at the Requeſt of *Boniface*, ordained that the See of *Rome* ſhould be *Head* of *all* Churches; for before that time the Church of *Conſtantinople* did write herſelf the *Prime* of *all* Churches. And if ſo, how can it be imagined that the *Primacy* of the *Roman* Biſhop ſhould be acknowledged and granted, as *Bellarmine* contends, by the ſixth *Canon* of the very *firſt* General Council?

Uſperg. in Phocam.

No; the certain truth is, this Canon was unworthily *corrupted* in favour of the *Roman* Biſhop: and although our Adverſaries cannot for ſhame acknowledge their own corrupting of Councils; yet they cannot deny but that it hath been familiarly done by other perſons. Nay, doubtleſs, in ſome caſes they themſelves *pretend* the *Corruption* of *Councils*, when in truth there was no ſuch matter. For if the Authority of ſuch or ſuch a Council be urged againſt the *Roman* Church, and cannot otherwiſe be well eſcaped, they have no other Shift to ſave themſelves, but onely to pretend that ſuch and ſuch a *Canon*, which they cannot anſwer, is *falſe* and counterfeit. 'Tis a certain Truth, that their Pope *Honorius* was condemned for a downright *Heretick* by the *ſixth* General Council, which conſiſted of an hundred and ſeventy Fathers aſſembled at *Conſtantinople*; ſo 'tis recorded: Αἱρετικὸς ὡς Θεόμαχος ἀνεθεμάτισε, ſaith one; The Council condemned *Honorius* and ſome other Aſſertours of the ſame Opinion

Auctor Incertus de Synodis.

as *Hereticks* that fought againſt God. And that this Sentence was juſt, *Photius* thus aſſures us, ὡς δικαίαν κατάκρισιν ἐπιθέντα, they brought them under a *righteous* Condemnation.

Photius in ſent. Synodo.

But will the *Roman* Church contentedly ſuffer any *Biſhop* of *theirs* to be condemned, branded and recorded for an arrant *Heretick*, and plead nothing in his behalf? What would then become of their dear *Infallibility*? what would then become of Pope *Agatho*'s Letter to the ſixth General *Council*, wherein he bragged, that the *Biſhops* of *Rome* never erred in Points of *Faith*? Or will the *Roman* Church acknowledg that a *General Council* may be miſtaken, and that in a matter of ſo great Concern to themſelves as they take the *Infallibility* of their Biſhops to be? 'Tis a ſhrewd *Dilemma* that our Adverſaries lie under in this caſe. For, if *Honorius* were certainly an *Heretick*, their *Infallibility* ceaſeth: but if *Honorius* were *no* Heretick, then may *General Councils* erre, which the *Roman* Church is loath to grant. Well; to ſecure the *Credit* of *Honorius*, and the *Authority* of that General *Council* which condemned him too, *Bellarmine* invents this trick, and tells us, *Erat Conſuetudo Græcorum ferè ordinaria corrumpendi libros*, &c. It was even the familiar Cuſtom of the *Grecians* to *corrupt* the Copies of *Councils*. And that it was ſo indeed in the caſe of *Honorius*, he takes for granted; *Sine dubio Honorii nomen inter eos qui damnantur à ſexta Synodo inſertum eſſe ab æmulis Romanæ Eccleſiæ*, &c. Without doubt the name of *Honorius* was inſerted among thoſe *Hereticks* whom the ſixth *Council* condemned

Bellarm. de Pontif. Rom. l. 4. c. 11.

demned by ſome perſons that bore no good will to the *Roman* Church. Thus would the *Cardinal* make the world believe, that what *Canon* ſoever ſpake any thing againſt a *Biſhop* of *his Church*, muſt certainly be *corrupted* and forged by the *Grecians*; who, as he intimates, had no great Kindneſs for the *Roman* See.

And methinks, if *Bellarmine* be real in what he ſaith; if he did verily ſuſpect that ſuch and ſuch Councils were indeed corrupted and forged by the *Grecians*, as being diſaffected to the *Roman* Church; we have greater cauſe to be jealous, that ſuch and ſuch Councils have been miſerably *corrupted* and forged by the *Latines*, who are ſworn enemies to *every Church* which differs from their own. For, ſince 'tis evident that they have made ſo bold with that famous Council of *Nice*, as to falſifie a *Canon* of *theirs*; we cannot think that they have ſo great a Veneration for any *other* Council beſides, but that they will corrupt and forge them, even as oft as their Intereſt doth ſo require.

And ſince 'tis thus; ſince, by the Confeſſion of our Adverſaries themſelves, ſuch and ſuch *particular Fathers* have ſtrangely erred; ſince the moſt Learned men of the *Roman* Church have acknowledged that even *Popes* and *Councils* have been, if not *miſtaken* in themſelves, yet baſely *corrupted* by others: we cannot think our ſelves obliged to accept the Authority and Teſtimonies of ſuch *Fathers*, *Popes* and *Councils*, as ſure and infallible Proofs of thoſe Traditions which are now received in and recommended by the *Roman* Church, though neither atteſted

by the *Universal Church*, nor warranted by the *written Word* of God. And, upon this score, we can doe no less then wonder at the *strange Confidence* and *unparallel'd Presumption* of the Council of *Trent* and their Abettours, who dare at least equal their *own Traditions*, which stand upon such *uncertain* and slippery *Grounds*, even to those *Holy Scriptures* which are *universally* owned and *infallibly* proved to be λόγοι Χριστοῦ, the *sure* and *undoubted* Word of *Christ*.

Δόξα Θεῷ.

FINIS.

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